

THÈSE COMPLÉMENTAIRE

Pour le Doctorat ès Lettres

Présentée à la Faculté des Lettres
de l'Université de Paris

WESLEY'S
LAST LOVE

By

AUGUSTIN LEGER

Ancien Élève de l'École Normale Supérieure
Professeur Agrégé d'Anglais à l'École Navale

J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.

29 & 30 Bedford St., London, W.C.

1910

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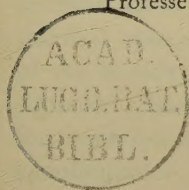
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PREFACE

THE manuscript containing the following account of Wesley's love for Grace Murray was received at the British Museum on May 9, 1829. A first edition of it came out in 1848 and a second in 1862 (both of which have long been out of print), under the somewhat cumbrous title: "Narrative of a remarkable transaction in the early life of John Wesley, from an original manuscript in his own handwriting, never before published."

No very accurate statement, since Wesley, forty-six years of age in June, 1749, was then more than half-way through his wonderful career; and the handwriting is not his, apart from a few corrections here and there, and the rough sketch of the first nineteen stanzas of the poem at the close of the booklet. These, however, are unmistakable signs of revisal and consequent approval by him, the work being further authenticated by the correspondence of almost every detail in it either with Wesley's Extracts from his Journals or other printed documents. Its genuineness has never been questioned by any student of Methodism.

Tyerman, who acknowledges it likewise, writes

that he "has compared the printed pamphlet with the original document ; and, with a few unimportant exceptions, including one or two omissions, has found it faithfully and correctly given" (*Life of John Wesley*, II, 48 note 1).

As a matter of fact, verbal alterations are pretty numerous wherever the editor has thought fit to improve upon Wesley's eighteenth-century style and grammatical forms. Nor is it easy to understand why so many clauses, sentences, and paragraphs have been suppressed, some of them quite essential to the perspicuity of the narrative ; for instance, the close of § 30 in Grace Murray's account, where she first mentions John Brydon, whose relation to her in § 38 otherwise remains very ambiguous ; again, the whole of § 68, where she attends John Bennet in his sickness, surely an important fact in the light of their further history. The most striking features of Grace's strange experiences have been also carefully left out (§§ 13, 16, 37, 47).

All this will be found faithfully restored in the present edition, a full and accurate reproduction of the British Museum manuscript with its very spelling, and, but for the few words necessary to make up the bottom line of a page here and there, with its very pagination : so that any reference to the first part of this volume refers to the same page in the MS.

In this life-like picture John Wesley's most characteristic features are, as it were, focussed.

TO
THE REV. HERBERT B. WORKMAN
D.LITT. (LOND.)
PRINCIPAL OF THE
WESTMINSTER WESLEYAN TRAINING COLLEGE
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF HIS KINDLY HELP
TO AN OUTSIDER

Yet none but narrow-minded hero-worshippers, blind lovers of the unreal superhuman, would discover throughout these pages anything likely to lower his moral stature or to stain his memory.

To the Rev. Nehemiah Curnock, to the Rev. John Telford, B.A., and to Mr. George Stampe, of Grimsby, the author is indebted for kind permission to quote at full length some interesting letters of John Wesley, first published in their respective contributions to the *Wesley Studies*. The *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, which is doing such excellent work, have been placed at his service with the same generosity.

It is also a pleasant duty to acknowledge how much this little book owes to the friendly help of Miss Toulmin Smith, Librarian of Manchester College, Oxford, and of Mr. Frank Rooke Ley, as well as to the literary suggestions of the Rev. A. L. Lilley, Vicar of St. Mary's, Paddington.

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CHIEF ABBREVIATIONS AND PECULIARITIES IN THE SPELLING OF THE MANUSCRIPT

B = Brother	Bp = Bishop	Ja ^s = James	J. B. = John Bennet
S = Sister	Xt = Christ	J ^{no} = John	M = Murray
Arm ^g = Armstrong	Perr ^t = Perronet	W ^y = Wesley	Wh = Whitefield
y ^e = the	w ^{ch} = which	c ^d = could	nev ^r = never
y ^m = them	w ^t = what	w ^d = would	und ^r = under
y ^r = your	wh ⁿ = when	sh ^d = should	c ^r = chapter
y ^s = this	sh ^l = shall	pr ^d = preached	labour ^r = labourer
y ^t = that	sev ^l = several	s ^d = said	mo ^r = mother
ab ^t = about	afterw ^d = afterward	pray ^r = prayer	
ag ⁿ = again	forw ^{ds} = forwards	Supp ^t = supper	
ag st = against	tow ^d = toward	Dec ^r = December	
betw ⁿ = between	husb ^d = husband	Nov ^r = November	
acc ^t = account	Edw ^d = Edward	Sept ^r = September	
inst ^t = instant	answ ^d = answered	even ^g = evening	
employ ^m = employment	deliv ^d = delivered	morn ^g = morning	
engagem ^t = engagement	endeav ^d = endeavoured	Jan ^y = January	
judgm ^t = judgment	persuad ^d = persuaded		
mom ^t = moment	rec ^d = received		
Sacram ^t = Sacrament	suff ^d = suffered		

The final *ed* of many past participles is spelt *t*, without any doubling of the consonant that precedes it: dropt, encompass, exprest, finisht, fixt, imprest, kist, languisht, mixt, past, prest, stamp, stopt, stript, and even commit = committed. In other cases, the consonant is doubled, while an apostrophe supplies the place of the elided *e* before final *d*.

John Wesley's Last Love

This Book a Diary of John Wesley, the chief of the Methodist Sect, (Copied by an Amanuensis) was given to me by Noah Vazielle of Stratford in C^o. Essex, whose mother had been married to the said J. W. and that the Verses at the latter End, are binde separate in this book ; in the hand-writing of the said J.W. Quod Attestor

Naphtaly Hart Not. Pub. Lond.

June 4th 1788.

l. 1. "a Diary" blotted out. "An Account of an Amour" substituted for it.

l. 4. Mrs. John Wesley died on Monday Oct. 8, 1781.

What Thou dost, I know not now
but I shall know hereafter !

1. In June 1748, we had a Conference in London. Several of our Brethren then objected to the Thoughts upon Marriage, & in a full & friendly debate convinced me That a Believer might marry, without suffering Loss in his Soul.

2. In August following, I was taken ill at Newcastle. Grace Murray attended me continually. I observ'd her more narrowly than ever before, both as to her Temper, Sense, & Behaviour. I esteem'd & lov'd her more & more. And, when I was a little recover'd, I told her, sliding into it I know not how, "If ever I marry, I think you will be y^e Person." After some time I spoke to her more directly. She seem'd utterly amaz'd, & said, "This is too great a Blessing for me : I can't tell how to believe it. This is all I cou'd have wish'd for under Heaven, if I had dar'd to wish for it."

§ 1. See p. 69, 79, notes.

§ 2. Like the Foundery in London, and Kingswood near Bristol, the House in Newcastle was Wesley's and his preachers' home, as well as a place for religious meetings and a school for Orphans. The site had been bought in Nov. 1742, outside the city walls, in a line with Pilgrim Street, and the first stone laid on Monday, Dec. 20. (Stampe, 16 ; Tyerman, I, 543.)

3. From that time I convers'd wth her as my own. The Night before I left Newcastle, I told her, "I am convinc'd God has call'd you to be my Fellow-labourer in y^e Gospel. I will take you wth me to Ireland in Spring. Now we must part for a time. But, if we meet again, I trust we shall part no more." She beg'd we might not part so soon, saying, "It was more than she c^d bear." Upon w^{ch} I took her wth me thro' Yorkshire & Derbyshire, where she was unspeakably usefull both to me & to y^e Societies. I left her in Cheshire wth Jn. Bennett, & went on my way rejoicing.

4. Not long after I rec^d a Letter from J. B^t & another from Her. He desired my Consent to marry her. She said, "She believ'd it was the Will of God." Hence I date her Fall: Here was y^e First False Step: w^{ch} GOD permitted indeed, but not approved. I was utterly amazed: But wrote a mild Answer to both, supposing they were married already. She replied in so affectionate a Manner, y^t I thought the whole Design was at an end.

§ 3. "Tuesday, Aug. 16.—We left Newcastle." Stockton, Osmotherley. Wednesday 17: Leeds. Saturday 20: Wakefield, Oulton. Tuesday 23: Bradford. Wednesday 24: Keighley, Harworth. Monday 29: Davy—Hulme. Wednesday 31: Chinley. Friday, September 2: Wednesbury. "Riding long stages," John reached London on Sunday.

§ 4-5. John Bennet, born in 1715 at Chinley, Derbyshire. Studied for the ministry under Dr. Latham, of Findern. Then justice's

5. John Bennet afterwards told me, That on y^e very night after he had engag'd to G. M., just after he lay down in Bed, & before he had slept at all, he "saw her sitting as in deep Distress. Mr. W. came to her wth an Air of Tenderness, & said, "I love thee as well as I did, on y^e day when I took Thee first." But she put him away from her wth her Hand. In y^e Morn^g, instead of writing to me, He ask'd her, "Is there not a Contract between you & Mr. W.?" Partly out of love to him, partly out of Fear of exposing me, she replied, "There is not." This was doubtless another False Step. He y^t standeth, let him take heed lest he fall!

6. She felt y^e Effects of this all y^e Winter, being under racking Uncertainty of Mind. When she rec^d a Letter from me, she resolv'd to live & die wth me, & wrote to me just what she felt. When she heard from him, her Affection for him reviv'd, & she wrote to him in the tenderest manner. In February particularly she sent him Word, "That if he loved her He sh^d meet her at Sheffield: For she was sent for to Ireland: And if he did not come now, she c^d not answer for what might follow."

clerk till 22 years old, when he entered upon commercial business: carrying goods across mountains between Sheffield and Macclesfield. At the Sheffield races in 1739, attends the preaching of David Taylor, a former servant of Lady Huntingdon. Travels with him. Introduced to John Wesley in June 1742.

4 John Wesley's Last Love

One cannot excuse her Behaviour in all this time : Doubtless she sh^d have renounc'd One or y^e Other. But those who know Human Nature will pity her much, at least as much as they will blame her.

7. J. B. determin'd to meet her at Sheffield. But, just as he was taking Horse, one brought him word, "He must come away directly ; for his Brother in law was dead." So, G. M., seeing nothing of him, came on to Bristol. There I talk'd wth her at large. She told me what had past between her & J. B., & seem'd to think that Contract was binding. But she was quite convinc'd, It was not, when I reminded her of what had past before, between her and me : Adding y^t "till now all this had seem'd to her as a Dream, nor c^d she possibly think, what I propos'd w^d ever come to pass : And y^t y^e Difficulty was y^e greater, because she c^d not consult wth any living Soul, for fear of betraying or displeasing me."

8. We past several Months together in Ireland. I saw the Work of God prosper in her Hands. She lightned my Burthen more than can be exprest. She examin'd all y^e Women in y^e smaller

§ 7. On Friday March 31, Charles Wesley found her at Kingswood, where John had been staying since Feb. 22. On Monday April 3, they all set out for Wales, where Charles married Sarah Gwynne at Garth on Sat 8. John reached Holyhead on the 12th, and landed near Dublin on April 18. They left for Bristol on July 20.

Societies & y^e Believers in every Place. She settled all y^e Women-Bands; visited y^e Sick; pray'd wth y^e Mourners; more & more of whom receiv'd remission of Sins, during her Conversation or Prayer. Mean time she was to me both a Servant & Friend, as well as a Fellow-labourer in y^e Gospel. She provided everything I wanted. She told me with all Faithfulness & Freedom, if she thought anything amiss in my Behaviour. And (what I never saw in any other to this Day) she knew to reconcile y^e utmost Plainness of Speech, wth such deep Esteem & Respect, as I often trembled at, not thinking it was due to any Creature: And to join wth y^e most exquisite Modesty, a Tenderness not to be exprest.

9. The more we convers'd together, y^e more I lov'd her; &, before I return'd from Ireland, we contracted by a Contract *de praesenti*: All this while she neither wrote to J. B. nor he to Her: So that y^e Affair between *them* was as if it had never been.

10. We return'd together to Bristol. It was there, or at Kingswood, y^t she heard some idle Tales concerning me & Molly Francis. They were so plausibly related y^t she believ'd them:

§ 9. "Any contract made *per verba de praesenti* was, before the time of George II, so far a valid marriage, that the parties might be *compelled*, in the spiritual Courts, to celebrate it *in facie Ecclesiae*" (R. M. Kerr's *Student's Blackstone*, 103).

6 John Wesley's Last Love

And in a sudden vehement Fit of Jealousy writ a loving Letter to J. B. Of this she told me the next day in great Agony of Mind: but it was too late. His Passion reviv'd: And he wrote her Word, "He w^d meet her when she came into the North."

11. We came to London. Talking wth an intimate Acquaintance there, she hinted at a distance, "that Mr. W. loved her." E. M^d replied, "Sister M., never think of it. I know you thro'ly. It will never do. The People here w^d never suffer you. And your Spirit w^d not bear their Behaviour. You have not Humility enough, or Meekness, or Patience: You w^d be miserable all y^r Life. And that w^d make him miserable too. So y^t, instead of strengthening, you w^d weaken his Hands. If you love yourself, or if you love him, never think of it more."

12. This sunk deep, and y^e more, because she durst not tell me of it. Soon after we set out for y^e North. At Epworth in Lancashire, J. B. met us. I was beginning to speak to him freely. But when he told me, "She had sent him all my Letters": with several other Circumstances of y^e

§ 10-11. See John Wesley's *Journal*: August 1. Kingswood. Charles Wesley's: August 7. Ludlow. "My brother & Grace Murray overtook us before we reached the Passage." August 10: "My brother having signed the settlement, set out at 4 with G. M. . . . the next evening met my brother & G. M. who came through Birmingham to Oxford, and on Sat. Aug. 12, I attended him to London." John left on Monday 28. E. M^d perhaps stands for

same kind, all w^{ch} I then believ'd to be true, I stopt & said no more. I saw, if these things were so, he had y^e best right to her. So I thought it better to bear y^e blame, then to lessen his Affection for her. I judg'd it right, y^t they sh^d marry without delay, & wrote her Word in y^e Morning, "I thought it was not proper y^t she and I sh^d converse any more together."

13. She ran to me in an Agony of Tears, & beg'd me, "not to talk so, unless I design'd to kill her." She utter'd many other tender Expressions. I was distress exceedingly. Before I was recover'd, J. B. came in. He claim'd her as his right. I was stunn'd & knew not what to say, still thinking, "She loves him best. And why sh^d I speak, to lay a ground of future uneasiness betwⁿ y^m?" Compassion likewise, and Love to her sway'd me much, observing she was sorrowful almost to Death; & fearing, "If each insist on his Claim, it will be cutting her in sunder. She can never survive it: She will die in y^e Contest." So I again determin'd to give her up.

14. In this purpose I went home. I felt no Anger, no murmuring, or repining; but deep

Elizabeth Maxfield, whose husband, Thomas, was one of Wesley's chief and earliest assistants.

§ 12. August 30: rode on to Lincoln and Epworth. Lancashire, in the MS., is an obvious mistake for Lincolnshire.

8 John Wesley's Last Love

Anguish of Spirit from a piercing Conviction of y^e irreparable Loss I had sustain'd. I had no design to converse with her any more. But about Two, one brought me word, "S. Murray is exceeding ill: She is obliged to keep her Bed." I then believ'd it right to visit her. When I came, she told me in terms, "My Dear Sir, How can you possibly think I love any other better than you? I love you a thousand times better than ever I loved J. B. in my Life. But I know not what to do. I am afraid, if I don't marry him, he will run mad." She shew'd me a Letter he had just sent her, w^{ch} confirm'd that Fear. In the Evening he came himself. And then, he on one Side, & David Trathen on y^e other, continued urging her, (telling her, they w^d not go all Night unless they had an Answer) till at length she said, "I *will* marry J. B^t."

15. The next Morning, She told me w^t had past. I was more perplext than ever. As I now knew she loved me, & as she was contracted to me before, I knew not whether I ought to let her go? For several Days I was utterly unresolv'd: Till on Wedn. Sept^r 6, I put it home to herself,

§ 14. David Trathen, a local assistant in 1747; "received into the work in 1748." (Bennet: *Minutes*, 49, 54). As David Tratham, mentioned among the Itinerants in 1751. (Tyerman: *J. W.*, I, 126-7.)

§ 15. After staying at Epworth from Wed. Aug. 30 to Mon. Sept. 4, Wesley rode to Sykehouse; on Tuesday afternoon, to Osmotherley; and on Wednesday 6, reached Newcastle.

"W^{ch} will you chuse?" and she declar'd again & again, "I am determin'd by Conscience, as well as Inclination, To live & die wth you."

16. We came to Newcastle y^e same Evening. The next day I wrote to J. B. as follows :

Newcastle upon Tyne

Sep^r 7. 1749.

My Dear Broth^r

1. The Friendship between you & me has continued long. I pray God it may continue to our Live's End.

But if I love you, I must deal plainly with you. And surely you desire I sh^d. Oh y^t you w^d consider what I say! with Meekness & Love, & wth earnest continual Prayer to God!

2. You exprest a willingness some Years ago, to be one of my Helpers in y^e Work of the Gospel. I gladly rec^d you into the Number, & you objected to none of y^e Rules whereby they act. If you had, you might have continued at y^r own Place; in friendship, tho' not in union, wth me.

3. As one of my Helpers, I desired you, three Years ago, to assist me at Newcastle. In my

§ 16, 2. John Bennet had become Wesley's helper in 1743. In June 1744, he attended the first Methodist Conference at the Foundery; and was one of the nine lay brethren formally invited to be present on June 15, 1747; when he was appointed to Yorkshire for July and August; to Wednesbury for September and October; to Lincolnshire for November and December.

3. "April 27, 1748, Mr. John Wesley came to Newcastle, & the day after his arrival, as we were sitting at dinner, a Gentleman in

House there I had placed a Servant whom I had tried several Years, & found faithful in all Things. Therefore I trusted her in y^e highest Degree, & put her in y^e highest Office, y^t any Woman can bear amongst us.

4. Both by y^e Nature & Rules of your Office you was engag'd to do nothing of Importance without consulting me. She was likewise engag'd by y^e very Nature of her's, as well as by y^e Confidence I repos'd in her, To consult me in all things: to take no Step of any Moment, without my Knowledge and Consent: Over & above w^{ch} She was peculiarly engag'd hereto, by her own voluntary & express Promise.

5. Notwithstanding this, you were scarce out of my House, when without ever consulting me, you solicited her to take a Step of y^e last importance without my Consent or Knowledge. You, whom I had trusted in all things, thus betray'd y^r trust, & moved her, to do so too. You, to whom I had done no wrong, wrong'd me, & that in an uncommon manner. You endeavour'd at a time when I expected nothing less, to rob me of a

black came up to the door. Mr. Wesley said, 'It is Mr. Bennet; I left him yesterday at Ferry-hill'' (*Memoirs of Mrs. G. Bennet*, 18.) In April 1746, Wesley was at Bristol and London, after staying at Newcastle from Wed. Feb. 26 to Monday March 17. There is a mistake in the month.

4. 1744, Friday, June 29. *Rules of an Assistant*, 12: "Act in all things not according to your own will, but as a son in the Gospel." (Bennet, 16.) *Large Minutes*, 4: "Take no steps towards marriage, without first consulting with your Brethren." (Wesley's *Works*, VIII, 309.) *Rules of Bands*, 1738, 21: "Any

most faithfull & most usefull Servant ; the fellow to whom, for y^e work committed to her Care, I knew not where to find in y^e three Kingdoms.

6. Last Autumn I observ'd her more narrowly, & perceiv'd she was such a Person, as I had sought in vain for many Years, & then determin'd never to part with. I told her this : but told her withall, "I c^d not as yet proceed any farther, because I c^d do nothing without consulting my Brother, as he had done nothing without consulting me." She answer'd, "It was so great a Blessing y^t she knew not how to believe it. It seem'd all as a Dream." I repeated it again, & there was no Shadow of Objection made.

7. I told her farther, "I am convinc'd it is not y^e will of God, y^t you sh^d be shut up in a corner. I am convinc'd you ought to labour wth me in y^e Gospel. I therefore design to take you to Ireland in Spring. Now we must separate for a Season ; but if we meet again, I trust we shall part no more."

And from this time, I look'd upon her as my own, & resolv'd y^t nothing but Death sh^d part us.

desiring to be admitted, to be asked his reasons for this, and whether he would be entirely open, using no kind of reserve, least of all in the case of love or courtship." (Tyerman, I, 195-6 ; Benham, 31-32.)

6. "My brother & I having promised each other (as soon as he came from Georgia) that we would neither of us marry, or take any step towards it, without the other's knowledge & consent, to-day I fairly & fully communicated every thought of my heart. He had proposed three persons to me, S.P., M.W., and S.G., and

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8. Three Days after I left her, without ever consulting me, you sollicitated her again. And in a few Days more, prevail'd upon her to comply, & promise Marriage to *you*.

9. That very Night God warn'd you in a Vision or Dream, of one who had a prior Right. But whom at your Instance, she push'd away. Yet you construed it in quite another manner.

10. However, thus far you went : You ask'd her, (instead of me,) "whether there was any such Engagement?" Partly out of Fear, partly out of Love blinding her Eyes, she replied, "There was not." And 'tis true, There was not so Explicit an Engagem^t. as wou'd stand good in Law : But such an one there was, as ought in conscience to have prevented any other, till it sh^d be dissolv'd.

11. Upon her Return from Ireland, GOD again interpos'd by means of those who were near you ; but you construed this likewise your own way : You rush'd forward, & by vehement importunity forc'd her tender & compassionate mind, To promise you again.

12. Now, my Brother, pray earnestly y^t GOD w^d shew you & me, what is right in y^s matter. Was not y^r very first Step wrong? Was it acting faithfully, even as a Friend, to move such a Thing without my Consent or Knowledge?

entirely approved my choice of the last. We consulted together about every particular, & were of one heart & mind in all things." (Charles, Nov. 11, 1748.)

Was it not much more wrong, considering you as an Helper? Who as such, ought to do nothing without my Advice?

Was you not hereby tempting her likewise to do extremely wrong; who was likewise engaged even as a Friend, but much more as an House-Keeper, to take no Step, without first consulting me?

Was not all this quite unjust & unkind? as well as treacherous & unfaithfull?

13. Was y^e Second Step any better than y^e first? The solliciting her in Derbyshire to act without y^e consent of a Father, & more than a Father? The endeavouring to rob y^r Brother & y^r Friend of his faithfull Servant, of y^e Fellow-labourer in y^e Gospel whom he had been forming to his hand for ten Years? Was this consistent either wth Gratitude or Friendship? Nay, wth Common Justice or Humanity?

14. Was y^e Third Step any better than y^e rest, The extorting that Second Promise? I doubt still whether a thousand Promises can bind to a thing evil & wrong in itself.

O that you w^d take Scripture & Reason for y^r Rule, instead of blind & impetuous Passion! I

Another Rule may help us to understand the tone of Wesley's letter: "O tell every one what you think wrong in him, & that plainly, & as soon as may be, else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste, therefore, to cast the fire out of your bosom." (Bennet's *Minutes*, 16.)

can say no more,—only this—You may tear her away by violence. But my Consent I cannot, dare not give: Nor I fear can GOD give you his Blessing.”

This W^m Shent promis'd to deliver with his own hand. But it was not deliver'd at all.

17. In the Afternoon, without any Importunity or Constraint, she wrote a letter to J. B. The purport of it was, “That she was more & more convinc'd, both he & she had sinn'd agst GOD, in entring on any Engagem^t at all, without Mr. W.'s Knowledge & Consent.”

18. Friday, Sept^r 8, we set out for Berwick, visiting all y^e intermediate Societies. Every hour gave me fresh proof of her Usefulness on y^e one hand, & her Affection on y^e other. Yet I c^d not consent to her repeated Request, To marry immediately. I told her “before this c^d be done, it w^d be needful, 1. To satisfy J. B., 2. To procure my Brother's Consent, &, 3. To send an Acc^t of y^e Reasons on w^{ch} I proceeded, to every Helper, & every Society in England, at the same time desiring their Prayers.” She said she sh^d not be willing to stay above a Year. I replied, “Perhaps less time will suffice.”

§ 16. William Shent, a barber in Leeds, was the means of introducing Methodism into his native town, about Michaelmas 1742. From his door, Charles preached in May 1743. Conference 1747 mentions him among “those that assist us only in one place.” He often escorted the Wesleys and went on their errands.

19. While we were at Berwick, I wrote down a short Account of y^e more remarkable Passages of her Life. O how has GOD fed thee wth Bread of Adversity & wth Water of Affliction! This endear'd her to me more than before; & at y^e same time strongly inclin'd me to believe, That y^s severe Discipline was design'd to prepare her, for a Comforter of many, a Mother in Israël.

20. That Acc^t is as follows:

1. I was born on January 18, 1715-16 in Newcastle upon Tyne. My Parents fear'd GOD: but were much distracted wth worldly Cares & Business. My Father spoke to me early of y^e Things of God: w^{ch} began to make an Impression upon me, when I was scarce four Years of Age, so y^t I was soon taken notice of for uncommon Seriousness. This was y^e more observ'd because my Brothers & Sisters were little concern'd about Religion. When I was ab^t four Years old, I dream'd I saw GOD sitting upon his Throne, coming down to judge the World. I was much terrified, till I thought He smil'd upon me; on w^{ch} my Fears vanish'd away. From y^t time y^e thoughts of Death & judgm^t were often strong

§ 19. September 8-9: Berwick. Wesley much out of order. Monday, 11: a day's rest, spent in writing. 14: Alnwick, Almouth. 16: Morpeth, Plessy, Newcastle.

§ 20. The old style year did not begin in January, but April. The first three months used to be dated as belonging to two different years, till the new style was adopted in 1752.

Both Robert and Grace Norman professed themselves members of the Church of England.

upon my Mind: w^{ch} made me earnest to serve GOD, & carefull to avoid whatever I believ'd to be displeasing to him.

2. About Six, I began to love going to Church, w^{ch} I had been accusom'd to long before. I likewise lov'd reading y^e Bible, & frequently read Six or Seven Chapters tog^t. When I read or heard of y^e Sufferings of X^t I often was deeply affected; tho' I consider'd him only as a Good Man, who suffer'd wrongfully. In reading y^e Epistles of S^t Paul I many times stopt, & said, "I don't understand this: What does it mean?" But there was none to inform me: So y^t I was oblig'd to rest contented.

3. When I was about Seven Years old, as I was one day in St. Andrew's Church, I felt my Soul overpower'd wth y^e Love of GOD. And I loved all Mankind. All my Affections seem'd changed. I wanted to be there always. These impressions remained upon my Mind for a long time, & indeed were never wholly effaced. But y^e Love of GOD reviv'd in me from time to time; tho' I knew nothing of y^e Truth as it is in Jesus.

4. In the mean while I found a continual Desire of doing good to all, especially y^e Poor. From this principle I gave away whatever money was

3. St. Andrew's was one of the five parish churches in Newcastle, the other four being St. Nicholas, St. John's, Allhallows, and St. Thomas.

given me, & anything else w^{ch} I c^d spare: and indeed more, at some times, than I ought to have done; when I took Bread or Meat, even without y^e Knowledge of my Mother, to feed one or two of our poor Neighbours, who I knew were ready to perish.

5. I believe I might be between 8 & 9 Years old, when I was sent to the Dancing-School. The Company here wore away, by swift Degrees whatever GOD had wrought in my Soul. My Love & desire of Heavenly Things cool'd & abated more & more; & I began to love Dress, Company, & innocent Diversions (so call'd) of every kind. Yet for some Years I retain'd my love of going to Church; till ab^t 14 or 15, this also gave place, & I us'd to spend a considerable part of y^e Lord's Day, in walking in y^e Fields.

6. When I was ab^t 16, I fell into an Acquaintance with a Young Man, whose Affections were soon fix'd upon me. By y^s means I grew still cooler and cooler to y^e Things of GOD. I convers'd with him ab^t 2 Years: At y^e end of w^{ch} he much press'd me to Marriage. But to this I was utterly averse: So y^t by being importun'd by him on one hand, & by my Father on y^e other, I

5. "Dancing was my darling sin, & I had thereby nearly lost my life; but God was merciful, and spared the sinner." (*Memoirs of Mrs. G. B.*, 2.) She had, moreover, "an enchanting voice, peculiarly sweet and of great compass in singing." (*ib.*, 3.)

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determin'd to escape from both, & go to my Sister at London.

7. I came to London in the beginning of Summer, 1734. After staying a Month wth my Sister, I went into a Service, where I was us'd more like a Child than a Serv^t. Here I went frequently to Church, but never to y^e Sacram^t, thinking I was not worthy. But indeed, I did not think much ab^t it, being swallow'd up in worldly Pleasures & Diversions, & having rarely any serious thought, concerning y^e World to come.

8. On y^e 13 of May 1736, I was married to Mr. Murray. In three or four days he went to Sea, & stay'd about ten or eleven Months. Soon after he was gone, I went down to my Father's; seeking rest, but finding none. My Husband was always before my Eyes, & ingross'd all my Thoughts: My continual fretting was y^e Occasion of my Miscarrying. Upon his return to London, I immediately went up to him: where I was with him four Months, before he went to Sea again; utterly thoughtless of GOD, as having given my Heart to y^e Creature instead of y^e Creator.

8. Alexander Murray's father, of a good Scotch family, had been concerned in the Jacobite rising of 1715, had forfeited his estate, and been banished with several of his brothers. In England, Alexander took to a seafaring life. (*Memoirs of Mrs. G. B.*, 3.)

9. He left me wth Child again, but return'd some weeks before I was brought to bed. In my Labour I found myself afraid to die, & yet had a trust in GOD. But when I recover'd, my Husband again had my Heart, & banish'd all other Thoughts. The next Year he sent for me down to Portsmouth, where we lodg'd at a Gentlewoman's House who went constantly to Church & Sacram^t & had Prayers in her House thrice a day. This put me upon serious Reflections on my Past & Present Life. And upon earnest Prayer, that GOD w^d enable me to serve him, & supply in me whatever he saw was wanting.

10. The Desires & Resolution w^{ch} were now wrought in my Soul, never wholly died away. As I was returning, some Weeks after, to London, I saw large numbers of People flocking together upon Kennington-Common. I ask'd what was y^e matter? And was answer'd, "A Gentleman, one Mr. Whitefield, was going to preach there." I had a great Desire to hear him: but my Husband being unwilling, I w^d not disoblige him.

9. *Memoirs of Mrs. G. B.*, 3-4. She must have been in Portsmouth about March or April 1739, as her fourteen months old second child could not have been born long before January 1738. She stayed there about six weeks.

10. Sunday afternoon April 29 was George Whitefield's first open-air preaching at Kennington Common. He was there again on May 6, on the two following Sundays, and on Saturday, May 26. (Whitefield: *Life and Journals*, 171, 173; *Political State of England*, May, 1739, t. LVII, p. 392; *Gentleman's Magazine*, April-May, 215, 271.)

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However y^t Desire never left me, tho' I c^d give little Reason for it.

11. In a Month, my Husb^d went to Sea, & a fortnight after, my Child died. As I look'd at her laid out upon y^e Table, y^e thoughts of Death seiz'd strongly upon me. This was follow'd by a strange Lowness of Spirits, without any Intermission. Every thing look'd dark & gloomy; I c^d take pleasure in nothing: Nor c^d any Company divert me. My Sister strove to divert me as much as she c^d but it was all in vain. At last, I told her, "I think it is my Soul," at w^{ch} she broke out in Amazem^t: "Nay; if y^r Soul is not safe, who have liv'd so harmless, w^t will become of me?" But notwithstanding all she c^d say or do, my Heaviness increas'd more & more.

12. While I was thus, a young Woman sent to me one day, to ask, if I w^d go wth her 'to hear Mr. W^d preach?' I gladly consented, & went with her to Blackheath. Several were sitting on y^e Mount, & singing. My Heart was melted down as soon as I heard them, & I felt a Sweetness I had never felt

11. Compare *Memoirs of Mrs. G. B.*, 5. "She replied, 'Your soul, child! you are good enough for yourself and me too' Poor creature! She was as ignorant as myself. But I could rest in no place; the Lord had made the wound, and no earthly balm could cure it."

12. From the *Memoirs*, 5-6, it appears Whitefield had just returned from Gravesend to London, an embargo being laid on all ships outward-bound, on account of the war with Spain. On June 14, he took John Wesley to Blackheath, where he himself had preached on Saturday 9, after calling at the Delamottes' on his way

before. I look'd up, and wonder'd where I was. When Mr. Wh. came, I thought there was something in his Look, w^{ch} I had never seen. He pr^d on John 3. 8. I listen'd, & liked all I heard ; but I understood it not. However, I found my Heart wholly drawn tow^d GOD, & I began to seek him with all my Strength.

13. I went to hear him again on y^e 3 following days : On y^e last of w^{ch} he preach'd his Farewell Sermon. When he was gone away, in order to imbarck for Georgia, I was utterly disconsolate again. I wept much in Secret, I walk'd up & down but c^d find no comfort. I spent much time in y^e Church yard, reading y^e Inscriptions on y^e Tombstones, & then standing and crying over my Child's Grave. My Sister labour'd more than ever to divert me, fearing I sh^d lose my Senses. And once she persuaded me to go into merry Company, who were met together to dance. But no sooner did I rise to dance wth them, than my Knees smote together. And all Desire of all worldly Diversions & Pleasures, was taken away from me in that Moment.

back from Gravesend. The *Memoirs* say young Delamotte came with him in a chaise.

13. Whitefield was again at Blackheath on Monday July 30. On Sunday August 12, "such prodigious numbers flocked to hear him, that with the addition of fourteen extra boats at the Isle of Dogs, they could not be transported fast enough." (*Political State*, LVIII, 133.) On Monday 13, he embarked at Gravesend on the *Elizabeth*.

14. The next Saturday, y^e young Woman sent to me again, to tell me, Mr. Wesley was come, & was to preach in y^e Fields y^e next morning. I slept little that Night. I rose at 3, & about 4 set out, tho' I knew not where Moorfields was. I overtook a Woman going thither, who shew'd me y^e way. When Mr. W. stood up, & look'd round on y^e Congregation, I fixt my Eyes upon him, & felt an inexpressible Conviction, That he was sent of GOD. And when he spoke those Words, "Except a Man be born again, he cannot see y^e Kingdom of GOD," they went thro' me like a Dart, & I cried out, "Alas! What shall I do? How shall I be born again?" After y^e Sermon, a Young Woman (Maria Price) seeing me all in Tears, ask'd, "What is y^e matter wth you?" I said, "I don't know." She said, "I will tell you; y^e hammer of GOD'S Love is breaking y^r Heart; only follow on, to know y^e Lord." She spoke many other sweet Words. I went home a mere Sinner, not knowing what I wanted, an Atonem^t for my Sins.

15. My Understanding was now open'd, so that I comprehended all I heard, as much as if I had studied it several Years. And from this time I

14. It was on Sunday, September 9, at 5 a.m. that John Wesley preached in Moorfields, where Whitefield had shown him the way on April 29. Originally a marsh, the place had been drained, planted with elms, & laid out in gravel walks; under the name of the City Mall, it had become the pleasure-ground of the East End.

omitted no opportunity of attending y^e preaching in every place. After I had done this for above two Months, as I was one Evening walking home, it came strongly into my Mind, "Beware of false Prophets;" "How do you know but these are y^e Men?" I came home in great trouble, cried earnestly to GOD, to shew me y^e right way? And then gave myself up to search y^e Scriptures: In doing w^{ch}, I was so fully satisfied y^e Doctrine was of GOD, y^t I could no longer entertain a moment's doubt concerning it.

16. My Convictions continually increas'd, till y^e Night Mr. W. pr^d his last Sermon at Fetter lane, before his return to Bristoll. I heard it, but my Heart was hard as a Stone, so y^t I was quite amazed at myself. As I step'd off y^e Bench in order to go home, suddenly I was struck down, & fell to y^e ground. I felt as if my Heart was bound round wth an Iron Girdle: I knew myself to be a lost, damn'd Sinner, without X^t, without Faith, hanging over y^e Mouth of Hell, & yet sustain'd in an inexpressible manner, by I knew not what or whom. I c^d not speak nor cry out, but only groan to GOD.

15. "Beware of false Prophets." (Matt. vii. 15.)

16. After first meeting at James Hutton's (a bookseller at *The Bible and Sun*, Temple Bar), the small Society established in May 1738, with Peter Böhler's advice, had removed to larger rooms in Fetter-lane. It used to meet every Wednesday night. Wesley must have been there on September 26.

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Thus I continued for half an hour, & then cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" When I was a little recover'd, two of our Sisters made a shift to lead me home.

17. The next Afternoon, just as Mr. W. began his Sermon at Pankridge, I was taken in y^e same manner. I felt y^e wrath of GOD abiding on me, & my Soul drawing nigh unto Hell, I c^d now neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep, nor do any kind of Business. I mourn'd Day & Night, till one advis'd me to read the third c^r of Jeremiah. While I read, I found an Hope spring up, y^t GOD w^d have Mercy upon me: w^{ch} nev^r ceas'd from that Hour, tho' mean while I was as sensible as ever of my lost Estate.

18. Mr. W. went out of Town on Monday. On y^e Monday following, ab^t Noon, I was sitting in my own House, wth Maria Price, reading y^e fifth c^r of y^e Romans, when in a moment all things became new. I seem'd to have new Eyes, & a new Understanding. I saw all I read in a New Light. My Burthen dropp'd off. My Soul was in peace.

17. 'Pancridge' Wells: a kind of suburban resort, in what is now St. Pancras. (F. Miller: *St. Pancras past & present*, 51.)

18. Monday October 1, Wesley rode to Oxford; Monday 8, Bristol. *Rom. v*: "Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into his grace wherein we stand; and let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but

My Tears were all gone. And I said to her, "Now I know God is my God; & he has forgiven my Sins." She replied, "Then be sure you hold fast y^r Confidence." It was not long before I found her Caution needful: it being strongly suggested "How c^d it be, that GOD sh^d forgive such a Sinner?" This threw me into a Agony of Prayer: In w^{ch} I had not continued long, before I cryed, "Now I know GOD is my GOD: I know for X^{ts} Sake He has forgiven *me*. I care not if all y^e Devils in Hell & all y^e men upon Earth were to deny it."

19. I c^d not conceal w^t GOD had done. I went immediatly & told my Sister. But she desir'd I w^d keep my Madness to myself, & not make her mad too. Yet I c^d not refrain from declaring y^e Goodness of GOD, wherever I came, whether they w^d hear or forbear. I c^d have even gone into y^e Streets to call Sinners to Repentance, & proclaim the Saviour of Sinners. I had an insatiable Thirst for y^e Salvation of all Men, w^{ch} constrain'd me to

let us also rejoice in our tribulations. . . ." It was on Monday October 8 that Grace read this, and felt her soul overpowered: "If all the devils in hell were dancing round me, I fear them not." (*Memoirs*, p. 7.) Compare the account Grace sent Charles Wesley on Friday, May 2, 1740, as published in his *Journal*: "I received the following simple letter. . . ." C. Wesley, after reading her

stop any loose women I met ; & even to seek them at their Houses, & beseech them to turn to GOD. I had no Fear, nor any Shame in the Cause of GOD, but exhorted rich or poor, as they came in my way, without respect of persons, to break off their Sins, & believe in y^e Lord Jesus.

20. One day, Mrs. Harvey desired me to go with her, & see a poor Man y^t was near Death. I ask'd him, "Are you afraid to die?" He replied, "O yes ; for I am a vile Sinner. I have committed all manner of Sins. I am lost. I am going to Hell." I said, "But X^t died for *you*, & has bore all *your* Sins." He answe^d "What X^t die for *me*, for *me* !" After speaking a few Words I went to Prayer : And he broke out, "He did, he did ! I feel he did !" & died singing Praise to GOD.

21. For four Months I went on rejoicing & praising GOD, & finding it my meat & drink to do his will : tho' I had now & then some doubts ; but they continued not, nor interrupted my Peace or Love. I was then one day making my Bed, with my Heart full of Prayer, when y^e Power of GOD fell upon me, & I cried out, "My Father, my Father !" and drop'd down to y^e ground. I saw

letter, desired her to come and speak with him, and admitted her into the Society. So far, she had merely attended the preaching, as any outsider could do. The next meeting of the bands, where she was invited to stay, probably was on Sunday evening, May 4. It was four months later that she was pulled down upon her knees, saw

(but in a manner no Tongue can express) GOD y^e Father looking upon me thro' his Son, as if I never had committed any Sin. I saw y^e Son as one wth y^e Father, & yet distinct from him. My Soul went up in an even Stream to GOD. I saw Him indeed Gracious & Merciful, & was fill'd wth such a reverential Love, as it had not enter'd into my Heart to conceive. And this glorious Sight was always before my Eyes, for more than a Year, so y^t I walk'd as on y^e Clouds, & trod both Sin & Temptation und^r foot.

22. During this time, I was inform'd, My Husband was taken by the Spaniards. I calmly replied, "Y^e Will of GOD be done!" I went into my Chamber, & was pouring out my Soul in prayer when I saw (as in a Vision) my Husband pursued by his Enemies, but escaping from them. I c^d have no doubt but it was so. I felt no fear; but left him in y^e hands of GOD.

23. When he return'd, he sent for me down to y^e Ship. Almost as soon as I came on Board, I heard several cursing & swearing; w^{ch} I c^d not bear. After a time, I heard my Husband swear. I

the Glory of the Godhead, and had these words impressed on her mind: "God cannot change." (*Memoirs*, 8.)

22. "1739, Monday, Oct. 29.—War with Spain was proclaimed." (C. Wesley: *Journal*.) Walpole had been compelled to assent to it, under the pressure of the commercial classes.

told him, "My Dear, you must not swear before *me*." He stared; but said nothing. I added, "I can't stay here. 'Tis like an Hell to me." He said, "What is come to you? what, are you got converted?" I replied, "You have need to be converted too." We went home, & after a while, he walk'd to see my Brother & Sister: Who told him, "We are glad to see *you*; but we are sorry for you, on y^e acc^t of y^r poor mad Wife. She goes to hear those Methodists." He came back to me, & ask'd, "If I heard Mr. Whitfield?" I answer'd, "I did, till he went away. And now I hear Mr. Wesley." He swore "I sh^d hear him no more." I replied, "You are y^e Lord of my Body: But X^t is y^e Lord of my Soul. If I were to yield to you in this, I sh^d lose my Soul: And my Blood w^d be upon your Head." He stamp't, & raved, & swore, "You shall leave them, or me." I answer'd, "I love *you* above any one on Earth. But I will leave *you*, & all that I have, sooner than I will leave X^t."

24. He went to my Brother again, to consult, what to do, & told me, (at his return) "You are utterly distracted, and I am determin'd to send you to y^e Mad-house in West-Gardens. It is for y^r own sake as well as mine. You have made me unhappy, & yourself too." I replied, "I am not

23-26. Compare the Account of her Companions forsaking her, and of her husband's displeasure and threats in her *Memoirs*, 9-11.

unhappy. I was never so happy in my life ; I never knew what Happiness meant, till I heard Mr. Wesley. I am ready to go not only to prison, but to death. I know in whom I have believ'd, & am confident he w^d give me to confess him to y^e flames." He walk'd to & fro, & said, "And can you leave me then?" I said, "Rather than I will leave X^t." He said, "Then to y^e Mad-house you must go." So he turn'd & went down Stairs.

25. I immediatly fell to Prayer, & had a confidence given me, y^t he c^d not proceed. In a quarter of an hour, he came back ; & said, "I cannot bear to put you in a Mad-house. But neither can I bear to see y^r utter ruin : You have almost ruin'd yourself already. And if you are resolv'd to go on thus, I will leave you : I will go as far as Ships can sail." I told him, "I can not help it ; I c^d lay down my Life for you. But I cannot destroy my Soul. If you are resolv'd to go, you must go ; I give you up to God."

26. Perceiving he c^d not prevail by y^s means, he soon after tried another. He gave me good words, offer'd me whatever I w^d have, & endeav^d by all manner of persuasions to make me "Keep

This is an instance of the difficulties Methodist neophytes often had to face. Among the reasons why many of his followers were poorer than before, Wesley mentions people being disowned by their nearest relations, and their subsistence cut off. (*Works*, VIII, 126.)

to my Church, & leave these People." But herein also God was my Helper. He then stay'd at home on purpose to keep me there. But one Afternoon I ask'd him to let me go out. He said, "What, to y^e Foundry?" I answ^d, "Yes." He replied, "No, indeed he never w^d." Yet in less than an hour, he said, "Go: but you will see what will follow." When I came thither, y^e People flock'd round me, & exhorted me to remain stedfast. And GOD greatly refresh'd me. So that I went home full of Joy & Pray^r, and Thanksgiving. I found my Husband at y^e Door; but God had softned his Heart, so that he gave me not one harsh Word.

27. Soon after I fell sick, & in a few days kept my Bed. He w^d fain have had a Physician; but I w^d not. I w^d fain have convers'd wth some of y^e Children of GOD; but this he w^d not consent to. He ask'd one day, if I w^d have him read by me? I said, "With all my Heart." He read till y^e Tears came down his Cheeks, & he s^d "Send for whom you have a mind." Mrs. Holton came up Stairs just then. Y^e very sight of her refresh'd me. She sat wth me a while, & from that very time I amended every day.

26. In November, 1739, Wesley was desired to purchase the Foundry, on Windmill-hill, close by Moorfields. The building had been wrecked in May 1716, by the explosion of guns that were being recast. "That vast, uncouth heap of ruins" was repaired or rather built anew. (J. Wesley: *Works*, VIII, 37-38.)

28. She left me one of Mr. Whitfield's Journals. He came in, took it up, & open'd where it is said, "I know GOD has forgiven me my many & great Sins; but I cannot forgive myself." The Tears started into his Eyes, & he said, "If these good Men talk so, what must I do? for I am a Sinner indeed." I clap'd my hands, & began praying earnestly for him. He went on: "I think you are in y^e right: I fear I have been fighting agst GOD. If it please GOD to raise you up again, I will never hinder you more."

29. From this time he was more & more convinc'd of Sin; he search'd the Scriptures much, willingly heard me read & talk, as I was able, of y^e things of GOD. He gladly rec^d any y^t fear'd GOD, listen'd to them wth deep attention, & desir'd nothing so much, as to know Jesus X^t, & him crucified.

30. I was all this time weak in Body; but my Soul was full of Love & Peace & Power. In y^e year 1740, the Apothecary told my Husband, "If anything w^d recover me, it w^d be my native Air." Upon this, he prest me to go down to Newcastle. With much difficulty he prevail'd. My Father (who had long thought me mad) was soon con-

It became the head-quarters of Wesley's followers, when they seceded from Fetter lane in July 1740, on account of doctrinal and personal differences. Charles, however, records previous meetings as early as Thursday, April 3, and from that date onwards.

28. Whitefield's *Voyage from London to Savannah* had been published in summer 1738. (Tyerman: *Whitefield*, I, 118 note.) At Hutton's, on February 6, 1739, John Byrom (*Remains*, II, 214, 217-218) bought the second part of it that was just out. A third

vinc'd, I spoke y^e words of Truth & Soberness. And so was a young man (John Brydon) who was shortly after a living witness of it. The rest of our Neighbours agreed, we were all beside ourselves, & cared for none of these things.

31. Here I rec^d a Letter from my Sister informing me, That my Husband had been taken by y^e Spaniards; but was now in Yarmouth road returning home. This was in Nov^r. Just then was y^e great Storm: In y^e midst of w^{ch} my Mother told me, "You must not expect to see y^r Husb^d any more." I answer'd, "Ye Will of y^e Lord be done," & found my Soul in perfect Peace. But I continued inst^t in Prayer, & in a few days it was clearly shewn me, he w^d return: And I said to my Mother one morning, "This day I sh^l see my Husb^d." Ab^t 4 in y^e Afternoon, he knock'd at the Door. I drop'd down; but soon rose again & praised GOD.

32. Three days after, my Father was taken ill. I was throly convinc'd he w^d not recover. He lay sick ab^t Eight days. On y^e Eighth day I was above Stairs, when y^e Power of GOD came upon me in an uncommon manner, wth those Words,

Journal extended from his arrival in London to his departure on his way to Georgia; a Continuation dealing with the time he was detained in England by the Embargo. (Tyerman, I, 235.)

31. "1740, Sat. Nov. 1. While I was preaching at Long-Lane, the storm was so exceeding high, that the house we were in, shook continually." (J. W., *Journal*.) There would have been no fear of Murray being lost, had his ship been at Great Yarmouth, Norfolk; nor, in this case, would he have been properly described as "returning home." Probably the harbour in the Isle of Wight, 10 miles W. of Newport, is meant here.

"It is finish'd, it is done." I went down immediately, & found him quietly resigning his Spirit into y^e Hands of GOD.

33. In the beginning of the Year 1741 we return'd to London. I was brought to bed in May following. My Husband follow'd y^e Home Trade, that he might be with me, till my Time was over. A Day or two after I was deliver'd, a Neighbour came in, but seem'd afraid to speak. I told her, "Don't be afraid: I know what is y^e matter. My Husb^d is prest. GOD'S Will be done." She seem'd amaz'd: But it was no Burden to me. I knew not then what murmuring meant. I never felt any Discontent or Anger, nor repining at GOD or Man.

34. In August my Husb^d sail'd for Virginia. I went down to him to y^e Ship (at Deptford) & stay'd wth him there two or three days. He saw that I was uneasy, & said, "My Dear, I see you can't bear this place. You shall go home. I will set you forward." As we were walking, he said, "I am a great Sinner: Commend me to y^e Prayers of y^r People." I then found great power to speak to his Heart. He wept much, till we were forced to part. After going a little way from me, he

33. France had just taken sides with Spain; and the contest was particularly keen about the West Indies and Florida, where Murray was accordingly sent. In time of war, magistrates were ordered to impress idle and loose men for H.M.'s service; and press-warrants were in the hands of constables. Press-gangs, i.e. detach-

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came back, & said, "He knew not how to leave me." He went on with me a while; I felt an uncommon weight, & y^e same was on him likewise. But still I c^d give him up to GOD, without one discontented thought.

35. I felt a daily Increase of Peace & Love, till y^e latter end of May 1742. About y^t time I was one Night just laid down, when I felt a weight come upon my Feet. I thought y^e Cat had come upon me, & strove to push her off. Presently I felt it rising higher & higher by my side, till it seem'd to lie by me at y^e full length of a Man. I felt an Awe, but no fear, praying continually and knowing I was in y^e hands of GOD. After a few Minutes it roll'd off & fell upon y^e Ground. I fell asleep, & dream'd I saw my Husband lying in his Coffin. I cried, & ask'd, "Will not you speak to me?" He just lifted up his Eyes, & shut them agⁿ. I waked in great trouble, slept again, & dream'd y^e same dream. When I waked, I was convinc'd my Husb^d was dead. But I was so fill'd wth GOD, that at this time nothing c^d disturb or interrupt my Happiness in him.

ments of seamen empowered to impress men into the naval service, were bitterly complained of by eighteenth century writers. (*Political State of England*, LVIII, 2, 5, 70. A. Young: *Northern Tour*, II, 148-9.) Several Methodist preachers were apprehended in a similar way. See Bennet, July 30, 1745; Jackson, *C. Wesley*, I, 415-416; *ib.*, 382-385, John Nelson, May 1744; *ib.*, 386-387, Thomas Beard; *ib.*, 391, John Slocome; *Methodist Preachers*, I, 90, 192, 264; J. Wesley, 12, 15 May; 19, 25 June, 1745.

36. The Ship did not return till Octobr^r following. I had been visiting one that was sick, being full of Love, & trampling upon all below, when a Messenger told me, The Prince Frederick was in y^e River. I hasten'd home, having my Soul stay'd on GOD. Presently after y^e Cook's Wife came in, & said, "Mrs. M., I have been on Board y^e Ship, & I saw y^r Husb^d well." I said, "No; my Husb^d is not in y^e Ship. But let us take a Boat & go aboard." My Sister & I did so. When we came alongside y^e Ship, one of y^e Sailors' Wives cried out, "Mrs. M., do not come here. Go ashore. Pray go ashore." I said, "Well, let us go ashore." As we were walking up y^e Stairs, she said to my Sister, "Mr. M. is drown'd." I turn'd & said, "I hear what you say." But my Soul was in peace, I rested in GOD. I felt y^e everlasting Arms were round me.

37. When I came home, I was still in peace. But after a time I took my eye off of GOD, & began to consider, How tender a Husb^d he had been, & how he used to look & and talk wth me. Then Satan gain'd an advantage over me, & I shrieked out, "What! must I see him no more?" Immediatly the Spirit of GOD withdrew from me,

36. Grace had been appointed a visitor of the sick, as well as the leader of a band. Bands were little companies, the members of which met once a week, at the least, to sing, pray, and confess their faults one to another. (Wesley's *Works*, VIII 258.)

& I drop'd down & lost my Senses. They carried me into the next Room, & open'd y^e Window. When I look'd up & saw the Sky, I cried to GOD, "O take all, only give me thyself, & let me have my Senses." For a week I continued wth only Intervals of Sense; nor did I ever recover the Memory I had before. As soon as I was able, I wrote to my Mother, & told her of my Husband's Death. In her Answer, she advis'd me to come to Newcastle. I ask'd Mr. W.'s Advice, Whether I sh^d or No? He told me, "He was going thither himself, & sh^d be glad to meet me there."

38. I sail'd from London tow^d y^e end of Octobr, & came to Newcastle a few days before Mr. W. Jn^o Brydon came frequently to me at my Mother's; But it was no Temptation to me. GOD had restored my Peace, & I desired noth^g but him. Mr. W. then lodg'd at Edw^d Wilkinson's, where I was with him, in the day, & at my Mother's at Night. Mr. Smith & Mr. Downes came hither to Mr. W. & invited him to Horseley. He took me wth him & left me there. I endeav^d to improve my Time, by speaking to every one I c^d, either at Horsley or y^e neighbouring Villages, as well as

38. 1742, Saturday, November 13, Wesley reached Newcastle, which he had first visited in May, his place being soon after supplied by Charles. Horsley-upon-Tyne, "8 (computed) miles from Newcastle," on the Hexham road. John Downes, of Horsley, was apparently one of the founders of the society mentioned here. The *Journal* first names him in July 1743.

by praying wth those of y^e Society. And GOD was with us of a truth. Many were convinc'd of Sin: James Watson & some others rec^d Remission of Sins.

39. Mr. Downes used till now to read in y^e Society. I ask'd him, "Will you not give us a Word of Exhortation?" He said, "I dare not." I replied, "Let us go to Prayers. We will ask of GOD to open y^r Mouth." I found great Enlargement of Heart in Pray^r. In y^e Evening, he expounded our Lord's Words to y^e Samaritan Woman. And from this time he found no want of Words: Neither were his Words without a Blessing.

40. I came back to Newcastle about Xtnas. Mr. W. then lodg'd at Mr. Gun's. And Mr. Meyrick being sick in bed, Mr. W. desired me to take care of him. This occasion'd my lodging in y^e House till he was well, & then return'd to my Mother's. Soon after Mr. Downes came for me, & carried me to Horseley. I stay'd here two or three weeks, employ'd as before; & with, at least, an equal Blessing. I had been but a

38. James Watson, "an eminent backslider." (*Journal*, June 5, 1772.)

39. John, IV, 10-26.

40. Mr. Gun's public-house, on the river-side, a mile from Sandgate, then in the open country. (Tyerman, *J. W.*, I, 386.)

The Wesleys never travelled alone: they were always accompanied by some of their brethren, a witness of their conduct and behaviour. (Whitehead, I, 271-272.) Thomas Meyrick, of Cornwall, thus riding with him, on December 15, caught such a violent cold, that his life was despaired of for a few days. (*Journal*, December 15, 20, 25.)

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day or two at Newcastle, when I was sent for to Tanfield-Leigh. After y^e Sermon, I pray'd wth many of y^e Society, & four rec^d Remission of Sins. The next day, I went to Tanfield, & met most of y^e Society, & GOD broke many of our Hearts in pieces. During all this time I had settled Peace, a full Confidence in GOD, a burning Zeal for his Glory, & a vehement Desire, to spend & be spent for all men. But I had not that Love & Comfort in GOD, that clear intercourse with Him, neither that Power to behold Him wth open Face, w^{ch} I had so long enjoy'd.

41. I was soon after appointed Leader of sev^l Classes at Newcastle: Till Mr. W. advis'd me to go to London, & bring down what I thought best of my Goods, that I might live altogether at his House. Accordingly I had agreed on my Passage, and was going down to Shields to take Ship, when a Note was deliv^d to me from Mr. W. desiring "I w^d stay at London when I was there." I was in amaze. I went up strait to Mr. W. & ask'd "What was y^e matter?" He immediatly took me with him to S. Jackson's, who accus'd me of speaking many things agst her, before John Brydon & several others. Mr. W. had

40. Tanfield-Leigh: about 7 miles S.W. of Newcastle, in Durham. Highly reputed for its coal. Tanfield village was a mile further on. Here Wesley first preached on Nov. 28, and again on Dec. 29, when there was a society.

41. Shields: the station of the coal-fleets, and a great centre

them all face to face, & they wholly acquitted me of y^e Charge. However, I retir'd to my Mother's, & came no more to Mr. W.'s, tho' I constantly attended both morning & evening preaching.

42. I was now more & more acquainted wth Jn^o Brydon, & tho' there never was any Engagem^t between us, yet it was commonly suppos'd, we were on y^e point to marry. Of this Mr. W. spoke to me one Morn^g, & advis'd me to go into y^e Country, without letting him know where I went. Accordingly I rode strait away to Tanfield, & visited as many as I c^d all round. And we seldom met or parted without a Blessing, so that the Flame was kindled in every place.

43. In y^e beginning of April 1743, Mr. W. return'd to London; I came thither soon after, & was seiz'd with a Fever. I was in great Heaviness of Soul, & cried to GOD, "Only let me know y^t I shall be sav'd at y^e last, I give up all things else into thy hands." Immediatly the Answer came, "Thou shalt be saved at y^e last, but it will be as by Fire." And in all the Doubts & Fears which I

of sea-trade at the mouth of the Tyne. (De Foe: *Tour*, 1742, III, 200-3.)

S. Jackson: possibly some relative of Henry Jackson, a weaver and Trustee of the Orphan-House, who died on February 20, 1766, nearly a hundred years old, leaving many children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. (W. Stampe, 21, 113-115. *Journal*, 18 May, 1764; 19 April, 1765; 23 February, 1766.) The being offended at each other Wesley points out as "the sin, which, of all others, most easily besets the people of Newcastle." (25-26 January, 1745.)

43. Wesley was in Northumberland and Durham from Saturday, February 19 to Easter Thursday, April 7, 1743.

have felt since then, that Word has been as an Anchor to my Soul, "Thou shalt be saved at y^e last."

44. In Autumn 1743, I return'd to Newcastle, & a Room was taken for me at Phyllis Gibson's. I now gave myself up altogether to y^e Service of the Church. Part of y^e Week I spent wth my Classes & y^e Sick: The other part I was in y^e Country. I went to Tanfield first. Many of us met in y^e Evening; & among the rest, a remarkably wild young Man, with whom I had talk'd before, a famous Gamester, who said, "He desired to break it off; but it was impossible." I took the Hymn book, but had scarce given out one Line, when an Awe from GOD fell upon us all: So that I was constrain'd to say, "Be still, & know that GOD is in y^e midst of us." I then pray'd. As soon as I named y^e Young Man, a Cry ran thro' y^e whole Assembly. Ann Laws, & three or four others rec^d a Sense of y^e Pardoning Love of GOD: And y^e young man cried out, "I will game no more; I will serve GOD, I will serve GOD."

45. I stay'd a Year in Mr. W.'s family, dividing my Time betwⁿ the Town & Country. All this

44. Classes: groups of about 12 persons, each member who was able contributing a penny a week, towards the expenses incurred in building schools and re-building the Foundry. First devised at Bristol on February 15, 1742. Soon used for disciplinary purposes. Organized in London on March 25. No trace of them in Newcastle until March 1743. (*Journal*, 15 February, 25 March, 1742; 6-7 March, 1743; VIII, 252-254; W. Stampe, 29.)

time I enjoy'd a settled Peace ; but not such Love & Joy as in time past. Indeed I found less of these, from y^e very time when I began to labour for other Souls : Having usually a deep Sense of my Wants & Ignorance & Emptiness : Then especially, when GOD was pleas'd to work among the People in so surprizing a manner, I then felt myself stript as it were of all things ; only I knew that GOD loved me.

46. Mr. W. now coming to Newcastle, I desired to speak wth him. I told him, " I c^d not stay in his Family any longer, as being utterly unable to please S. Jackson in any thing." He desired to hear us face to face ; Mr. Meyrick & Westall were present. After we had had a full hearing, he consented I sh^d go. So I had no farther Concern in y^e Family.

47. While I was at Newcastle John Brydon married, & soon grew quite light & careless. This shock'd me exceedingly : I was afraid his Blood w^d be upon my Head, because I did not marry him. The more I reason'd y^e more confused I was ; till I had lost Sight of GOD. Yet I c^d not be unemploy'd a Moment, but was continually praying with

46. Wesley's next visits were June 29-July 18, and Oct. 31-Nov. 21, 1743. His method of removing offences, he grounded on Apostolic rule. (Mat. xviii. 15-17.) Wesley's *Works*, VI, 114-124 : *The Cure of Evil-Speaking*. One of the offices of the class-meeting, similarly, was to clear up misunderstandings. (VIII, 253.)

Thomas Westall, or Westell, a carpenter ; among the very first to meet weekly at Bristol in Ap. 1739, and to offer to serve Wesley as a son in the Gospel. (VII, 277 ; VIII, 311 ; Wesley Hist. Soc., V, 4-5.)

and exhorting others. One Day, as I was walking over y^e Croft to meet my Class, I felt a Cloud fall in a Mom^t, as it were, on my Body as well as Soul. An horrible Darkness overwhelm'd me, & I thought, "I am taking all this pains for GOD & for my Soul: What if I have no Soul? What if there be no GOD?" Immediatly I look'd up & said, "If I had no Soul, how c^d I live or move? If there be no GOD, who spread out y^e Heavens like a Curtain? Who laid the Foundations of y^e Earth?" I then cried out aloud, "If thou be a GOD, save me!" But there was no answer. When I came to y^e stile, I was violently tempted, to throw myself down & dash my Brains out. I hasten'd on, till I came into y^e Passage leading to y^e Minor Chair, where an unspeakable Horror fell upon me. I thought I had sinn'd so that GOD had quite forgotten me, & given me up into y^e Devil's hands; Nevertheless I exhorted y^e Class with all my might, To cleave close to GOD: And afterwards began to say y^e Lord's Prayer; but I was stopt in y^e midst. I then desir'd, that one of y^m w^d pray for me. None c^d, but they all burst into Tears. At length I forced myself to

47. *Chare*, or *Chair*: a dialect word, in very common use at Newcastle; means a narrow lane, alley, or passage between two houses. (Wright, I, 564.) The Manor Chare abutted on Stock-bridge, Cowgate and Broad Chare being the continuation of it to the river-front. The Croft Stairs led to it, coming from City road. The Carliol Croft: in the northern part of the town, within the walls.

pray ; & They were all overpower'd wth y^e Presence of GOD. But I myself was dark still ; & so weak in Body, that two were obliged to lead me home.

48. When I came home, I lock'd myself up in my Room at P. Gibson's. I pray'd wth my Lips (w^{ch} I did almost continually). But I felt it not ; my Heart was quite froze ; it was hard as y^e nether Milstone. I read y^e Bible ; but y^e Promises were nothing to me ; I c^d claim none of them. On y^e contrary, I took all y^e threatnings to myself : all was lamentation & mourning & woe. I saw nothing but Hell before my eyes : I had no hope of escaping. Yet I abhor'd Sin : I c^d not bear to speak or hear an idle Word, or to see anything light or trifling.

49. One Morning Mr. Maxfield was mentioning a Predestinarian, who died in deep Despair. It immediatly struck me, "So shall I. She said, God had created her to damn her. And so he did me. He determin'd to damn me, & therefore has given me up. And he gave me that Grace & Love w^{ch} I once had, only to increase my Damnation." And these Thoughts I c^d never

49. Thomas Maxfield : a toy-maker in Bristol ; strangely tried under Wesley's preaching at Nicholas-street on May 20, 1739. Soon began to help in the work, Wesley being encouraged by his mother to allow him, though a layman, to expound and preach. Married a well-to-do Methodist young lady, Miss Elizabeth Branford. Was Charles's constant companion from March to December, 1740. Ever since 1740, Wesley and his followers had strenuously

intirely shake off, but they pursu'd me Day & Night.

50. I was likewise grievously tormented with that Scripture, Heb. vi, 4. I knew I had tasted y^e good Word & the Powers of y^e World to come : And therefore believ'd, that seeing I was thus fallen away, it was impossible to renew me again to repentance ; & that there remain'd nothing but a fearfull looking for of fiery Indignation.

51. Indeed I mourn'd & wept for GOD continually. But this gave me no manner of Comfort : It being suggested, "Yes, so Esau mourn'd & wept : but he found no place for Repentance. Neither c^d he obtain y^e Blessing he had cast away, tho' he sought it carefully wth Tears."

52. Many times, such a slavish Fear fell upon me, that I thought I was just dropping into Hell. I felt myself utterly banish'd from GOD. I remembered the days of old, when I saw the smiling Face of GOD. But now I c^d not see him but as an angry Judge. I had no Spark of Hope left, & saw nothing before me but y^e blackness of Darkness for ever. I wish'd I had nev^r been born. I wish'd I had no Soul. I wish'd I had been

opposed the idea of Predestination, advocated by Whitefield and the Calvinistic Methodists.

50. *Heb.* vi. 4-9 : "For as touching those who were once enlightened, & tasted of the heavenly gift, & were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, & tasted the good word of God & the powers of the age to come, & then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance ; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, & put him to an open shame. For the

a Beast or creeping Thing. Often I was so desperate, as not to have a Desire of Salvation, nor to care whether I was sav'd or damn'd. Sometimes I even wish'd to be in Hell, that I might know the worst. And frequently, in y^e midst of all this, my Body was so affected that y^e Bed shook under me: & I felt as if one had begun at y^e Crown of my Head & flay'd off my Skin, yea, my Flesh & all, to y^e very Soals of my Feet.

53. I was one Morning at breakfast at Mr. Huntley's, when I was seiz'd in this manner. Hannah Jones saw my Colour change, & ask'd, "What is the matter?" I said, "I am not well." I rose up & hasten'd away to S. Proctor's, where my Band was waiting for me. I threw myself on y^e Bed, & roar'd aloud for y^e disquietness of my Soul. They were all frightened. I cried out, "Pray. Pray. Can none of you pray for me?" S. Proctor began. After she had spent some time, She broke off, & said, "I can pray no more. I think your Burden is come upon *me*." Ann Gooddell then burst into Prayer. The Power of GOD came

land which has drunk the rain that cometh oft upon it, & bringeth forth herbs meet for them for whose sake it is also tilled, receiveth blessings from God: but if it beareth thorns & thistles, it is rejected and nigh unto a curse; whose end is to be burned."

53. Sister Proctor: "1790, May 2. This morning, about 8 o'clock, old Rebecca Proctor exchanged the cross for a crown of

down, & struck that word to my Heart: "This is y^e Cup of which y^e Son of God drank. Wilt Thou not drink of his Cup?" I cried, "Lord, I will. If it be his Cup, I *will* drink of it. Only give me thy Strength." A little Ray of Hope then darted into my Soul.

54. But this lasted not long. In a little time I was again cover'd wth thick Darkness. The same Week some of my Band came to see me at my Mother's. While we were sitting at Tea, I was seiz'd as before wth the same Agony, both of Body & Soul. I set down my Cup, & desir'd we might pray. My Mouth was fill'd with Words: & all around me were melted into Tears. But my Heart was neither broken nor heal'd. I remain'd as dead & dry as ever: Tho' I dared tell none how I was, for fear of turning y^e weak & lame out of y^e Way.

55. I often said, "O that I had Wings like a Dove, that I might fly away & be at rest! That I might escape from all the busy ways of Men, & be alone, where no Eye might see me!" I wander'd about in Fields & solitary places, & w^d gladly have been always there. But I did not dare to forsake those who were commit to

glory. She had lived in the Orphan-House above 40 years, and has been a worthy member of the Society. She died in much peace, & now rests from her labours." (Atmore's *MS. Journal*; Stampe, 86 note.)

54-55. Tyerman severely censures "the woman, who, after a few years of high religious profession, could, for so long a period, sink into almost sceptical depression, & yet, all the while, meet her

my charge; neither to stay away either from y^e Morning or Evening preaching. I likewise visited y^e Sick; tho' I was myself shrunk almost into a Skeleton: So y^t many used to ask me, Why I came out? & told me I was fitter to be in bed than anywhere else.

56. About this time I began to doubt, "Whether Christ was GOD?" And to reason, "How he c^d be One with the Father?" I reason'd, till I had no Light concerning him left, no more than if I had never believ'd. Then I thought, "How unmercifull GOD was, & how hard to be entreated: How cruelly He dealt wth me; with a thousand other blasphemous Imaginations. These Arrows stuck faster & faster into my Soul, & y^e Poison of them drank up my Spirits. Yet I kept all to myself, & was continually exhorting others, To believe in the Name of y^e Son of GOD.

57. Nevertheless GOD sometimes gave me refreshing Sleep, tho' at other times my Sleep departed from me. I likewise often mingled my Meat wth Tears, & often forgot to eat my Bread. Often I purposely abstain'd from food, because of y^e saying of our Lord; "This Kind goeth not out but by Pray^r & Fasting": And that for

bands, & go through all the other Methodistic duties prescribed for her, as though nought had happened." (II, 55-6.) "None knew anything of my state but God & Mr. Wesleys," she says in her *Memoirs* (p. 17). Compare *Poem*, st. 15-17.

57. Mark ix. 29.

several days together. This I the more willingly did, because I found it impair'd my bodily Strength: For I desired Death rather than Life; I loath'd y^e Thought of my living long. Another reason of my frequent & long continued fasts was, That I might destroy whatever it was, whereby I had been a Snare to men; that I might never hurt any man more.

58. It was now the time of Lent, 1744, when I was much tempted, "Not to eat any more." Under this persuasion, I neither ate nor drank for several days: Nor had any desire either of meat or drink. I felt no pain; only I grew weaker & weaker. But this was no Concern to *me*. I was willing to leap into a fiery furnace, or to have my Body cut in a thousand pieces, so my Soul might only be saved at last. But immediatly after receiving y^e Sac^t on Easterday, y^e Snare was broken: I pray'd, as I c^d, that GOD w^d shew me his Will: & for a time I had a little Comfort.

59. Yet I soon grew darker and darker again, having no Sight of GOD, no Peace, no Hope. However I resolv'd to bring as many others to GOD as I c^d, & to live & die in his Work, whatever became of me after Death. With this view, I

58. Easter-Sunday in 1744 fell on March 25. See the *Journal* of John Wesley, who reproved some merry people for the way in which they were keeping it. In London he had just left his brother, coming back from the north and Newcastle. And they had agreed one would stay in town while the other endeavoured to strengthen their brethren in other parts. 1744 being a leap-year, Lent must have begun on Wednesday, February 8.

went one day to visit One in Sandgate. But it was vehemently suggested, "Why, what can you say to him? You know not GOD: You know not, If there be any Christ?" I came in, & ask'd, "William, is y^e Son of Man risen upon y^r Soul?" He said, "Not yet; but I believe he will soon." I pray'd wth him. His Soul was fill'd with Peace. And two or three days after, he quietly gave up his Spirit to GOD.

60. The same Night, I was at home, when the Power of Darkness fell upon me, & overwhelm'd both my Body & Soul. My Spirit was wounded within me. My Body felt as if it was all empty & burnt up, so y^t I c^d compare it to nothing but a piece of Wood which had been burnt to a Coal. The next day I was in racking Pain: And the next Evening I was in y^e same condition as before. I continued thus till I fell asleep. But Sleep brought no relief. I was scared wth Dreams & terrified wth Visions. And when y^e Morning came, y^e light was as y^e Shadow of Death: And "I waked to all y^e woes I left behind."

61. About Xtnas, 1744, Mr. Briggs came down from London. As soon as I saw him in y^e Desk, it was as it were whisper'd to me, "There is a Messen-

59. Sandgate, on the river-side, below the Tyne bridge, east of Newcastle, outside the walls, was the most wretched, overcrowded, and unhealthy part of the town. See *An Inquiry into the Causes of Febrile Contagious Diseases*, 1804, pp. 2, 47, 58.

61. William Briggs or Briggs: one of Wesley's helpers; perhaps the one whom Charles, on January 28, 1749, married to Elizabeth Perronet.

ger of GOD to thee for good." In y^e Afternoon Jn^o Nelson told us, "One of our Brethren was come from London, who w^d meet any of y^e Bands that desired it." I desired he w^d meet mine. He did so in y^e Morning. And a few days after (on my return from Horsley) we had much Conversation together. I open'd my whole Heart to him, not willingly keeping back any thing. The more we convers'd, y^e more my Mind was eas'd. My Doubt concerning the Sins of Jno. Brydon, being imputed to me, was now remov'd, & the horrible dread was taken away.

1745.

62. From this time I began to hope agst hope. But I now fell into sufferings of another kind. I was seiz'd wth an inexpressible Sense of y^e Judgments of GOD hanging over y^e Nation. Everything I saw or heard, the very blowing of the wind, the waving of y^e Trees, the murmuring of y^e Water, seem'd to bespeak the Wrath of GOD, & y^e heavy Punishm^t he was about to bring on a People laden with Iniquities. And as I was one Morning alone, a dread fell upon me, as if we were all ready to be destroy'd. I thought y^e

61. John Nelson, the most famous of the early itinerants; born in October, 1707, at Birstal, West Riding of Yorkshire. A mason. After many spiritual trials, much impressed by Whitefield and Wesley's preaching at Moorfields in spring, 1739. Going back to Yorkshire, end of 1740, started religious meetings in his neighbourhood, where he welcomed Wesley in May, 1742. Accompanied him to Cornwall in 1743. May 4, 1744, pressed for a soldier. Only discharged in July, when some one else was brought to redeem him.

Papists were just going to swallow us up. I cried vehemently, "Lord, I am not fit to die. Neither can I resist unto Blood. But give me thy Strength, & I will suffer all Things."

63. I continued groaning under these Apprehensions, till Mr. C. W. came to Newcastle. Under an Exhortation he gave one Night to y^e Bands, I rec^d power to hope. And I went home, rejoicing in hope. But Satan soon thrust sore at me again, suggesting, "What Pride & Presumption it was, for such a Sinner as me, to hope for Mercy." I cried out, "Well Satan, if the Son of GOD will not save me, I am content to perish. And if my perishing will glorify GOD, I am content to go to Hell." And I found a willingness in my inmost Soul, to suffer any thing w^{ch} might glorify him: yea, if it were really for y^e Glory of GOD, to remain in Hell to all Eternity.

64. Mr. W. took me with him into sev^l places in y^e Country: & I found a continual Increase of Hope. And I never wanted Power from GOD to pray with, & labour among y^e People. After he went away, I was meeting a Band, when of a sudden I was struck wth sharp pain from y^e crown of y^e head to the soal of y^e Foot. Immediately

63-64. Charles Wesley's last visit before the Pretender's invasion took place in November and December, 1744. "Thursday Dec. 13.—I took my leave in Acts xx. It was a solemn time of prayer and love." On December 12 he mentions Nelson's coming. The chief places he then visited in the country were Biddicks, Tanfield, Wickham, Spen, Burnup-Field, Horsley, Placey or Plessy, and Sunderland.

I was in a burning Fever. At y^e same time, I felt a full & clear Sense of y^e pardoning Love of GOD: & I knew my Soul was set at liberty, & y^t Satan was departed from me. I saw, all I had suff^d had been for good. I saw GOD had been with me walking on y^e Waters, & that when I went thro' y^e fires, he had cover'd my head, that I might not be consumed. I was carried home & kept my Bed for 12 or 14 days. But Pain was now nothing. I knew GOD. I rejoiced in GOD my Saviour. I glorified Him in y^e fires. I was willing not only to die, but if it were his will, to live, & suffer all my days.

65. As soon as I was able to sit an Horse, I went to Sheep-Hill, where I recover'd my Strength in a few days, to the Surprize of all that saw me. At my return to Newcastle, I gladly resumed my work, of visiting y^e sick & attending my Classes and Bands. My labour was now again my delight. My Soul was stay'd upon GOD continually. I had no doubt of his Love. I had no fear of his Wrath: & no Desire but to do & suffer his will. I was more than ever before crucified to y^e World, & y^e World crucified unto me. I was free from

65. Sheep Hill: according to all particulars in Wesley's *Journal*, a farm-house or hamlet south of the Tyne, in Durham, about an hour's ride from Newcastle. Perhaps the same as Kiphill, in Tanfield parish.

66. Wesley came to Newcastle on September 18, 1745, when he found the inhabitants in the utmost consternation at the news that the Pretender had entered Edinburgh. He left on Monday, November 4.

every thing here below, & wholly athirst for GOD, the living GOD.

66. In August y^e Rebellion broke out, which was no Surprize to *me*. Mr. W. came to Newcastle in Sept^r & in Nov^r set out for London. Soon after, in pursuance of his advice, I went to live at Sheep hill. Three days in each week I was at home; y^e rest I usually spent in the Societies. In Dec^r, Mr. W. wrote, That I sh^d go & take charge of y^e House at Newcastle. I was much averse to this at first: but was convinc'd in a Mom^t, that GOD had call'd me to it. So, on Christmass Eve I left Sheep-hill: & came into y^e House on Xtmass-Day.

67. I found Mr. Shepperd ill in y^e House: But in a few weeks he recover'd. Mr. Houghton then fell sick of a Fever. For three weeks I was never undrest. But I wanted neither rest nor sleep. At least I felt no want, till he recover'd his Health. And then I was taken wth the fainting fits which never left me since.

68. After Mr. W. came, Mr. Haughton relaps'd. I w^d have set up wth him again, but Mr. W. absolutely forbad me, to sit up any more than one Night.

67. Mr. Shepperd first appears on September 13, 1743, sailing from St. Ives to the Scilly Isles in company with Wesley and John Nelson. He attended Wesley to Cornwall in June and July, 1745, then all the way to the North.—John Haughton, a weaver; 1746, one of the assistants to be more particularly employed in visiting the classes. One of the seven Trustees in whom the property of the House was vested on March 5, 1745. Wesley was again in Newcastle from Wednesday, February 26, to March 17, 1746.

Soon after he return'd, Mr. Bennet was taken ill. I attended him likewise in his Sickness. But y^e Work was too hard for me: which being represented to Mr. W. he desired Sister Proctor to come into y^e House & help me. This was in Spring 1746. Having now One to assist in y^e business of y^e Family, I divided my time: Saturday, Sunday, Monday & Tuesday, I usually spent at Newcastle. The rest of y^e week I spent in y^e Country, visiting y^e Bands, y^e Classes, y^e Sick, & y^e Backsliders, in each place.

69. Mr. Westall was with us in Summer, & in Autumn was taken ill of a Fever. When he began to recover, I fell down. I kept my bed about three weeks; but my Soul was happy in GOD. I told S. Proctor, "GOD has laid me upon this Bed, that I may have time for Prayer;" And my Heart & Mouth were fill'd with Prayer continually. For great part of this time, it was imprest on my Mind with an unspeakable force, "That in three Years, I sh^d see a great change." But of what kind it was to be I knew not.

70. When I began to recover, Mr. Westall & I went up together one Night to y^e Leads. As we were sitting, he told me, How the Devil had

68. See above, § 16. It must have been in February, 1746, that Grace first saw Bennet: "The *name* struck me, that I was amazed at myself, nor could I shake it off for some time." He was seriously ill for twenty-six weeks. As none of the preachers would acquaint him of his danger, Grace did, believing him to be a dying man (*Memoirs*, 18). Frequency of contagious diseases in Newcastle as-

tormented him at Bristol, when he lay wth Mr. W. And immediatly he cried out, "He is not far from us now." I said, "I feel him near: But GOD is nearer than Him." We came down into the Kitchen & began to sing: But we knew not how to leave off. We continued singing & praying one after y^e other, & did not rise till it was past 12 a clock. The same Spirit of Prayer was upon us y^e next day (Thursday) & so every day till y^e following Thursday: So that we c^d scarce do any thing but pray day & night, & continued therein twice, till past two in y^e Morning. On y^e 2nd Thursday the Bands met. While Mr. W. paus'd, I was constrain'd to break out into loud Prayer. A Cry went forth. Many wept. Many prais'd GOD. All (but four) were fill'd with Consolation. Mr. W. & I had begun fasting y^e day before. We tasted nothing till y^e next day, Friday Evening. And we found no Inconveniency to our Bodies. But our Souls were fed as with marrow & fatness. Eliz. Boomer was not at y^e Bands, being confined in her own House. But she did not thereby lose her share of y^e Blessing. She saw (as she afterw^d said) The

cribed to bad sanitary conditions: it was not unusual for families in poorer districts, from five to seven in number, to live together in a filthy unventilated room; their pigs sometimes with them. The military quarters were especially bad: a large army being just then encamped to resist Charles Edward's threatened invasion, 2000 men had died by February, 1746.

§ 70. Mr. W., in this paragraph, means Thomas Westall.

Glory of the Lord at that very hour, resting upon y^e House & was fill'd in an unusual manner wth Peace & Joy in y^e H. Ghost.

71. On Sat. Morning, Jane Tinkler & Mary Armstrong came up after the Preaching. S. Tinkler had known y^e Peace of GOD, but was now a Sinner stript of all. S. Armstrong had never known y^e Peace of GOD; but was earnestly mourning after it. I cried to GOD: & was constrain'd to say in y^e midst, "Now, S. Tinkler, your Soul is set at liberty." She instantly answer'd, "It is, it is. I taste y^e Powers of y^e World to come." We then pray'd for M. Armstrong. The Answer soon came: And she also was set at liberty. We then pray'd for my Mother, for Mrs. Armstrong & her Husb^d, that they might know in whom they had believ'd. Mrs. Arm^g did not rest from that Hour, till she knew her Sins were blotted out. Mrs. Arm^g soon after died in peace. And ab^t y^e same time my Mo^r rejoic'd in GOD her Saviour. After Pray^r, we went to breakfast. In y^e midst of w^{ch} I cried out, "I see Mr. C. W. He is not far off." And in a few minutes after, Mr. W^y & Mr. Perr^t came to y^e Gate.

71. "Thursd. Oct. 23, 1746.—I set out with Edward Perronet, and reached Newcastle by Saturday noon" (Charles Wesley's *Journal*). Therefore, the "Spirit of Prayer" week was Wednesday, October 15—Thursday, 23. Edward and Charles Perronet were the sons of the Vicar of Shoreham and grandsons of a French refugee. They were admitted into the number of Wesley's ordinary assistants in 1747 (Bennet, *Minutes*, 49).

72. When he went away Jan^y 1747, he ask'd me to go a day's journey wth him. I said to S. Proctor, "I will put up a Gown & some Linnen; for I believe I shall see John Nelson's house before I see you agⁿ." We rode to Ferry-hill. Mr. W. then cast lots, which of us, B. Swindels or I, sh^d go forw^{ds}. The Lot fell upon me. I went into Lincolnshire & Yorkshire, met y^e Women of y^e Societies, & settled y^e Bands. I found it was good for me to be among them: & God gave us many Blessings together.

73. In Feb. I return'd to Newcastle. Mr. W. came soon after, & spent part of y^e Lent there. After he went, Br. Hopper carried me to Allandale. Mr. Richards went with us, & stay'd 3 days. The Night after he went back y^e Society met, & we had just such a time as y^e Thursday night at Newcastle. Several were broken to pieces, & several heal'd. We met every Night after, & had the same Blessing. In the day time partly y^e people came to me, partly I went to them. By this means I spoke with all y^e Society, (as well as many others) & divided y^e Believers into Bands. I had at first design'd to stay only a week. But y^e work of GOD so mightily prevail'd, & y^e poor

72. Charles rode to Biddicks on Monday, December 29; to Ferry-hill on Tuesday; to Osmotherley on Wednesday; 1747. Thursday, January 1, Acomb, near York; 2-11, Epworth, Grimsby; 12, Sikehouse; 14, Leeds; 18, Birstal. The practice of casting lots in order to ascertain the will of God the Wesleys had borrowed from their Moravian fellow-passengers to Georgia, in 1735-6.

Robert Swindels, in October, 1746, conducts C. Wesley and Perronet to the Cheshire Societies, whence he apparently followed them to Newcastle. Assistant in 1747. Died 1782.

people were so importunate with me, that I c^d not break away till I had spent a Month among y^m. My Employ^{mt} then was as usual : Part of y^e week in town, the other part in y^e Country Societies.

74. This Summer, 1747, B. Wheatley, Dunstan & Webster were all in the House together. Mr. Wheatley w^d suffer none but me to come near him, w^{ch} confin'd me more than I desir'd, & wore my Body down, till I was exceeding weak. About Midsummer I went up to London. When I return'd, some of our Sisters began to be offended, & to make many Objections to me. I did all I c^d to remove them. I call'd frequently upon them, & spoke as lovingly & plainly as I c^d. But it did not avail. They were still equally displeas'd, & endeavour'd to spread the same Spirit am^g others. But I did not as yet perceive any resentment tow^d them : Only I was griev'd, because they hurt their own Souls.

75. The next Lent, 1748, Mr. W. spent wholly in y^e North. He took me wth him thro' all y^e Country-Societies. At this our Sisters were more offended than ever. And others soon caught y^e

73. C. Hopper, a farmer's youngest son, born December 25, 1722, Ryton parish ; coal-waggon driver. Heard of J. Wesley in May, 1742 ; attended Charles's preaching in October. Converted in spring, 1743, Leader of Low-Spen Society. Removed to Sheep-hill preaching-house in 1746.

Thomas Richards, one of the Orphan-House Trustees. Member of Conference, 1745. Appointed to the Newcastle Circuit for November and December, 1747 ; September, October—London ; July, August—Wales.

74. Edward Dunstable, Eleazer Webster appointed to Newcastle

Infection. This put me upon Reasonings that profited nothing. Till now I had rece^d all things, Honour or Dishonour, the Good will or Ill will of any, as from y^e hand of GOD. But now I began to think, "How hard this is? To use me thus? After I have slaved for them so many Years? Well, I will get out of it all. I will leave them to themselves. I will suffer this no longer." By this means I was fretted and weakened, & was brought to think of what I had before cast far from me.

76. When Mr. W. came down in y^e latter end of y^e year, & took me wth him again into y^e Country, y^e Offence increas'd, & I look'd at it more and more. It was now that Mr. W. being ill, I was obliged to be with him much, both day & night, & he spoke to me more freely than before. But I c^d not believe even what I heard. It seem'd too strange to be true. And all y^e time I was with him in his Return, thro' Yorkshire & Derbyshire, I understood him not; not even when he said, "In Spring you shall go with me to Ireland. We must part for a while. But if we meet again, I trust we shall part no more."

for July and August; James Wheatley (a member of Conference in 1745), for September and October.

75. As a matter of fact, John Wesley, who had been staying in Newcastle from Monday, March 2, to Easter Monday, April 20, 1747, when presumably Grace accompanied him through the Country Societies (hence her Sisters' offence), in January, 1748, left London for Bristol, Wales, and Ireland, reaching Dublin on March 9, and only taking ship for Holyhead on May 18. The confusion of Old and New Style may be responsible for the mistake.

77. The day after Mr. W. went away, Mr. B. propos'd Marriage to me. A day or two after, I consented, without asking Mr. W.'s Advice. I then return'd to Newcastle. After resting a Week there, I visited all y^e Societies in the South, settled y^e Bands, & endeavour'd to remove Offences, & regulate all things as well as I could. I then went y^e North Round, & stay'd a Week at Berwick. I was very ill when I came there. Two days I stay'd within, & many came to me. The third Night, I was under much Concern, & earnestly besought GOD, To shew me, for what end he had brought me to that place? It was then imprest on my mind, To meet y^e Class of Children: Which accordingly I did y^e next Morning. As soon as I began to sing, the Power of God was upon us, & increas'd more & more. We continued together till past 12 a Clock: During which time GOD reveal'd his pardoning Love to Sr. Archbold, & 4 or 5 of y^e Children, some of whom walk in y^e Light to this day.

[Thus far her Account.]

"1748, Saturday July 9.—Setting out between two and three, we reached Newcastle about three in the afternoon" (Wesley's *Journal*). After repeatedly visiting the Societies in Northumberland and Durham, he left on Tuesday, August 16, still accompanied by Grace Murray. She remained with John Bennet, who was with them on August 30-31 at Chinley, in Derbyshire, his dwelling-place.

"Thus far her Account" has been added, in Wesley's handwriting.

21. We stay'd here from Saturday to Thursday, & the more I knew her, y^e more I loved her. She frequently told me, "In time past I cou'd have married another, if you w^d have given me away. But now it is impossible we sh^d part: GOD has united us for ever." Abundance of Conversation to y^e same effect, we had in our Return to Newcastle: Where on Sund. 17, we contin'd conversing together till late at Night, & she gave me all the assurances w^{ch} words c^d give, of the most intense & inviolable affection. The same she renew'd every day, yea, every hour when we were alone, unless when we were employ'd in Prayer: which indeed took up a considerable part of y^e time we spent together.

22. On Monday & Tuesday, that I might be able to form a clearer Judgm^t of her real Character, I talk'd at large with all those who were disgusted at her, & inquir'd into their Reasons for it. I found none of them new, except Sister Lyddel's, "That she had y^e impudence to ride into y^e Town wth Mr. W." (w^{ch} was accidentally true; Mr. P. & Ja^s Kirshaw having rode away from us). Mr. Williams accus'd her "Of not lending his Wife her Saddle" (being just going to take horse her-

§ 21. Here Wesley resumes the thread of his narrative, staying at Berwick from September 9 to September 14, 1749, and going back to Newcastle on Saturday, 16.

§ 22. At John Lyddel's, in Gateshead (the suburb of Newcastle, south of the Tyne), Wesley mentions preaching on Wednesday, October 9, 1745. Mr. P. = Perronet. James Kirshaw: Wesley's other travelling companion. Enoch, James, Richard, Robert, and Thomas Williams were members of the Connexion. Richard was at Newcastle in September-October, 1747.

self). Mrs. Williams, of buying a Holland Shift (w^{ch} was not true). Nancy & Peggy Watson, of buying a Joseph before she wanted it: Ann Mattison, of being proud & insolent: And Betty Graham, of buying an Apron worth ten Shillings" (w^{ch} indeed was not bought at all). I plainly perceiv'd Jealousy & Envy were y^e real ground of most of these Accusations: And idle, senseless Prejudice, of y^e rest. Offence taken, but not given. So that after all, her Character appear'd untouch'd, & for any thing they c^d prove, She had done all things well.

23. Wed. 20. Christoph. Hopper met us at Horseley, & guided us to Hinely Hill: Understanding he knew J. B.'s Design, I told him y^e whole Affair. He was much moved, & undertook to go himself to J. B. & try if he c^d not satisfy him. To this end he set out on Friday, intending to go on slowly, so as to be at Chinley ab^t Tuesday.

24. Thurs. 21. At her request, we renew'd the Contract made in Dublin. B. Hopper observing her pause & tremble, before she spoke y^e words, ask'd, "Sister M., have you any Scruple upon

§ 22. In February and March, 1744, Charles Wesley mentions Mr. Watson, one of the town Sergeants, and lately the greatest swearer in Newcastle, "who now professes the faith which he persecuted in his daughters."

"A Joseph": an old-fashioned riding-coat, worn especially by women.

§ 23. In 1748 C. Hopper had removed from Sheep-hill to Hindly Hill, some way north-west of Allendale, in the fork above the confluence of the East and West Allen, whence the work was spreading in the dales of the Allen, the Tees, the Wear, in Hexhamshire, and westward into Cumberland.

y^r mind?" I added, "If you have y^e least Scruple, I beg you w^d stop. Pray, do." She chearfully replied, "I have none at all." And then spoke y^e words immediatly. An hour after I took horse for Whitehaven, leaving her to examine & settle y^e Women-Bands in Allandale. She stood looking after me, till I was up y^e Hill. I had not one uneasy Thought, believing GOD w^d give us to meet again, at y^e time when he saw good.

25. Yet, from y^e time I came to Whitehaven, there was something hanging on my Mind, which I knew not how to explain. And y^e first Night I lay there, I dream'd J. B. came to me. I ask'd him, "Where is G. Murray?" He replied, "At Chinley." I wak'd in a Moment, & (for that time) slept no more. I wrote to her on Sat., & was amaz'd at myself, when I began my Letter with those Lines :

"There is I know not what of sad Presage
That tells me we shall never meet again."

But I endeavour'd to cast it off, being persuaded that now neither Life nor Death c^d part us.

§ 24-25. Whitehaven was developing into a great harbour for the coal-trade, and an important industrial and commercial centre. "Thursday, Sept. 21. Moved by the pressing instances of Mr. Cownley, and convinced the Providence of God called me thither, I left all my company, but Mr. Perronet, at Hinely-hill, & set out for Whitehaven." After preaching in the market-place on Friday and Saturday, he endeavoured to form a society.

26. On Sunday in y^e Afternoon, I was calmly waiting upon GOD, when those words in y^e first Lesson came as a Sword to my Heart, *Son of Man, behold I take from thee y^e Desire of thine Eyes with a Stroke!* Immediately a shivering ran thro' me, & in a few minutes I was in a fever. But when I came home, seeing a vast Congregation in the Market-place, I c^d not send them empty away. And while I was speaking to them, GOD remembred me & strengthen'd me both in Soul & Body.

27. As soon as I had finisht my Letter to J. B. on y^e 7th Instant, I had sent a Copy of it to my Brother at Bristol. The Thought of my *marrying* at all, but especially of my marrying a *Servant*, & one so *low-born*, appear'd above measure shocking to him. Thence he infer'd, That it wou'd appear so to all Mankind: & consequently, that it w^d break up all our Societies, & put a stop to y^e whole Work of GOD.

28. Full of this, instead of writing to me (who would have met him any where at y^e first Summons) he hurried up from Bristol to Leeds.

§ 26. Sunday. "I began examining them one by one. At 8, I preached at the Gins, another village, full of colliers, about half a mile from the town. . . . Between 1 and 2, I preached again at Hensingham [a large colliery about a mile from the town] then . . . hastened to church, & in the midst of the Service I felt a sudden stroke. Immediately a shivering ran through me, & in a few minutes I was in a fever. I thought of taking a vomit immediatly & going to bed. But, etc. . . ." The lesson is taken from *Ezekiel*, xxiv. 15-17.

There he met with Rob^t Swindells, & Will^m Shent ; Who inform'd him (w^{ch} he had heard slightly mention'd before) "That G. M. was engaged to J.B." This was adding Oil to y^e Flame : So he posted to Newcastle, taking wth him Will^m Shent, not many degrees cooler than himself.

29. Here he met wth Jane Keith, a woman of strong Sense & exquisite Subtlety. She had long been prejudic'd agst G. M., w^{ch} had broke out more than once. She gave him just such an Acc^t as he wish'd to hear, & at his Request, set it down in writing. The Sum of it was, "1. That Mr. W. was in love wth G. M. beyond all sense & reason : 2. That he had shewn this in y^e most publick manner, & had avow'd it to all y^e Society, and, 3. That all y^e Town was in an uproar, & all y^e Societies ready to fly in pieces."

30. My Brother, believing all this, flew on for Whitehaven, concluding G. M. & I were there together. He reach'd it (with W. Shent) on Monday. I was not at all surpriz'd when I saw him. He urg'd, "All our Preachers w^d leave us, all our

§ 29. Jeannie Keith, of Scotland, where she was persecuted on account of her religious principles, had taken shelter in the Orphan-House. There she was known as "Holy Mary." Tyerman (I, 474, 543), quotes two letters from her to Wesley, dated 1747, and November 1, 1748, which do not waste love on Grace Murray. She married a master-builder at Alnwick, went back to the Presbyterian faith, and died about 1752. In November, 1751, Wesley describes her as fallen from a great height (*Works*, XII, 194).

Societies disperse, if I married so mean a woman." He then objected, That she was engag'd to J. B. As I knew she was pre-engaged to me, as I regarded not her Birth, but her Qualifications, & as I believ'd those Consequences might be prevented, I c^d see no valid Objection yet. However I did not insist on my own Judgm^t; but desired y^e whole might be prefer'd to Mr. Per^t w^{ch} he readily consented to.

31. As soon as I was alone, I began to consider with myself, Whether I was *in my Senses*, or no? Whether Love had *put out my Eyes* (as my Brother affirm'd) or I had y^e use of y^m still? I weigh'd y^e Steps I had taken, yet again, & y^e grounds on w^{ch} I had proceeded. A short Acc^t of these I wrote down simply, in the following terms.

1. From y^e time I was Six or Seven years old, if any one spoke to me concerning marrying, I used to say, I thought I never sh^d, "Because I sh^d never find such a Woman as my Father had."

§ 30. Vincent Perronet, born in 1696; graduate of Queen's College, Oxford, and Corpus Christi, Cambridge; curate of Sundridge, in Kent, December 23, 1718; inducted to the vicarage of Shoreham on February 17, 1727. For a time held aloof from the Wesleys, whom he took to be enemies of the Church. John was introduced to him by the Rev. Henry Piers, of Bexley, in August, 1744, was preaching in his church in October, 1746, and addressed to him his *Plain Account of the People called Methodists* in 1748. Later, Charles used to style him the "Archbishop of the Methodists." He died on Monday, May 9, 1785.

2. When I was about Seventeen (& so till I was Six or Seven & twenty) I had no thought of marrying, "Because I c^d not keep a Wife."

3. I was then persuaded, "It was unlawfull for a Priest to marry," grounding that Persuasion on the (supposed) Sense of y^e Primitive Church.

4. Not long after, by reading some of y^e Mystic Writers, I was brought to think "Marriage was y^e less Perfect State," & that there was some Degree (at least) of "Taint upon y^e Mind, necessarily attending y^e Marriage-Bed."

5. At y^e same time I view'd in a strong light St Paul's words to the Corinthians: And judg'd it "impossible for a married man to be so without carefulness, or to attend upon y^e Lord with so little Distraction, as a single man might do."

6. Likewise, being desirous to lay out all I c^d, in feeding y^e hungry, & cloathing y^e naked, I c^d not think of marrying, "because it w^d bring such

1. Susannah Annesley (January 20, 1669–July 23, 1742) married the Rev. Samuel Wesley on November 12, 1688. She really was an accomplished woman. John was born at Epworth Rectory on June 17, 1703; Charles, on December 18, 1707 (Telford, *C. W.*, 18–20).

3. John was ordained deacon by Bishop Potter on September 19, 1725; priest on September 22, 1728 (Tyerman, I, 41, 43, 57).

4. William Law brought him under the influence of mystic writers.

5. St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 32–34): "But I would have you to be free from cares. He that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife."

Expend, as w^d swallow up all I now gave away."

7. But my grand Objection for these twelve years past has been, "A Dispensation of the Gospel has been committed to me. And I will do nothing w^{ch} directly or indirectly tends to hinder my preaching y^e Gospel."

8. My first Objection was easily remov'd by my finding some, tho' very few Women, whom I c^d not but allow to be equal to my Mother, both in Knowledge & Piety.

9. My Second, "that I c^d not keep a Wife," held only till I found reason to believe, There were persons in y^e world, who if I were so inclin'd, were both able & willing to keep *me*.

10. My Third vanished away when I read with my own Eyes Bp. Beverege's *Codex Conciliorum*. I then found y^e very Council of Nice had determin'd just y^e contrary to what I had supposed.

11. St. Paul slowly & gradually awaken'd me out of my Mystic Dream; & convinc'd me, "Ye

10. Bishop Beveridge's *Pandectae Canonum Conciliorum*, Oxford, 1672, fol. Wesley began reading it on Monday, September 13, 1736, in Georgia: "Nothing could so effectually have convinced us, that both particular & general councils may err, & have erred; & that things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless they be taken out of Holy Scripture."

Bed is undefiled, & no necessary Hindrance to y^e Highest Perfection." Tho' still I did not quite shake off y^e weight, till our last Conference in London.

12. I was next, tho' very unwillingly convinc'd, That there might be such a Case as Dr. Koker's : who often declared, He was never so free from Care, never serv'd God with so little distraction, as since his Marriage with one, who was both able & willing, to bear that Care for him.

13. The two other Objections weigh'd with me still, Increase of Expence & Hindering y^e Gospel. But wth regard to y^e former, I now clearly perceive, That my Marriage w^d bring little Expence, if I married one I maintain now, who w^d afterw^d desire nothing more than she had before : And w^d cheerfully consent, That our Children (if any) sh^d be wholly brought up at Kingswood.

14. As to y^e latter, I have y^e strongest Assurance, w^{ch} y^e nature of the Thing will allow, y^t y^e person proposed w^d not hinder, but exceedingly

12. Dr. Koker : a physician of Rotterdam, whose acquaintance Wesley made in June, 1738, on his way to Germany and the Moravian settlement of Herrnhüt, and with whom he kept up a correspondence. Died about 1749.

13. Kingswood : a coal-mining district in the close neighbourhood of Bristol. Here Whitefield "crossed the Rubicon" by first preaching in the fields on February 17, 1739. On April 3 he was laying the foundation-stone of a school, towards which the colliers had contributed £20. When he was gone to Georgia, the undertaking was carried through by Wesley. The site he pitched on was between the London and Bath roads (*Moravian Messenger*, 1877, pp. 97, 100). The building, completed in spring, 1740, contained one large room, and four smaller ones for the teachers' residence (*Journal*, Nov. 27, 1739 ; June 1, 1740. Tyerman, I, 269-270). In 1741 a master and a mistress were kept there

further me in y^e Work of y^e Gospel. For, from a close Observation of several Years (three of which she spent under my own roof) I am persuaded she is in every Capacity an Help meet for me.

15. First, As a Housekeeper, She has every qualification I desire. She understands all I want to have done. She is remarkably neat in person, in cloaths, in all things. She is nicely frugal, yet not sordid. She has much Common Sense: Contrives every thing for y^e best; makes every thing go as far as it can go: Foresees what is wanting & provides it in time; does all things quick & yet without hurry: She is a good Workwoman; able to do y^e finest, ready to do y^e coarsest Work: Observes my Rules, when I am absent as well as when I am present: And takes care, that those about her observe y^m, yet seldom disoblige any of them.

16. As a Nurse, (which my poor, shatter'd in-feeble Carcase now frequently stands in need of) She is careful to y^e last degree, indefatigably patient, & inexpressibly tender. She is quick,

(*Journal*, May 23). Having long objected to many features of the most celebrated schools abroad as well as in England, and wanting one that was not placed in a great town, where all sorts of children were not promiscuously admitted, and where they received sound learning from truly Christian schoolmasters, Wesley at last made up his mind to set it up himself. In the middle of Kingswood, three miles from Bristol, on Monday, April 4th, 1746, he laid up the first stone of a house "capable of containing fifty children, besides Masters and servants, reserving one room, and a little study" for his own use (XIII, 289-292). On June 24, 1748, the opening sermon was preached, the general rules, course of studies, hours, and diet decided upon by Conference (Bennet's

cleanly, skilfull, & understands my Constitution better than most Physicians.

17. As a Companion, She has Good Sense, & some Knowledge both of books & men. She is of an engaging Behaviour, & of a mild, sprightly, chearful, & yet serious Temper.

18. As a Friend, She has been long tried & found faithfull. She watches over me both in Body & Soul; understanding all my Weaknesses, sympathizing with me & helpfull to me in all: Never ashamed, never afraid: Having a continual Presence of mind, in all Difficulties & Dangers: In all enabled to cover my head & strengthen my hands in GOD.

19. Lastly, as a Fellow Labourer in the Gospel of X^t (the light wherein my Wife is to be chiefly consider'd) She had in a measure w^{ch} I never found in any other both Grace & Gifts & Fruit. With regard to y^e first; She is crucified to y^e world, desiring nothing but GOD, dead to y^e Desire of y^e Flesh, y^e Desire of y^e Eye, y^e Pride of Life: Exemplarily chaste, modest, temperate; yet without any Affectation. She is teachable &

Minutes, 54-57). In March, 1749, there were four schools: the boys boarded in the new house, opened on June 24, 1748; the girls in the old; the day scholars were taught in the other two. They were chiefly Methodists' children. Those of travelling preachers were instructed gratis.

17, 19. The MS., written, or copied from the shorthand, by an amanuensis, has been revised and corrected, with paler ink, in the characteristic hand of John Wesley. His second thoughts are curiously evidenced by several erasures: 17, "both of books &" struck out. 19, similarly from "the Desire of the Flesh" to "without any Affectation."

reprovable; Gentle & longsuffering: Eminently compassionate, weeping with those that weep, bearing both my Burthens, those of y^e Preachers, & those of y^e People: Zealous of Good Works, longing to spend & be spent for y^e Glory of GOD and y^e Good of Men.

20. As to her Gifts, She has a clear Apprehension & a deep Knowledge of the things of GOD: A quick Discernment of Spirits, & no small Insight into y^e Devices of Satan. She has been train'd up, more especially for these ten years, in y^e word of truth: Having constantly attended both y^e Morning & Evening Preaching, without despising y^e Meanest of our Preachers. She is well acquainted with, & exercised in, our Method of leading Souls; having gone thro' all our little Offices, & discharg'd them all entirely well. She has a ready utterance, a Spirit of convincing as well as of persuasive Speech: A winning Address, an agreeable Carriage, in whatever Company she is engaged. By means of all which she is exceedingly beloved, almost wherever she comes, & is dear, in an uncommon degree, to great numbers of y^e People.

19. "teachable, long-suffering," }
 20. "both the morning, beloved," } struck out.

The difficulties and dangers alluded to, § 18, were many: 1748, August 16, 22, Stockton, Halifax-Cross rude congregations; Colne rabble; Bolton Cross stone-throwing. Welsh mountains riding in April. Irish Channel storms. Narrow escape of capsizing near Limerick. Cork riots in May and June.

21. And as to y^e Fruits of her Labours, I never yet heard or read of any woman so own'd of GOD: So many have been convinc'd of Sin by her private Conversation: And so many have rec^d Remission of Sins in her Bands or Classes or under her Prayers. I particularly insist upon this. If ever I have a Wife, she ought to be the most usefull Woman in y^e Kingdom: Not barely one, who probably *may* be so, (I c^d not be content to run such a hazard) but one that undeniably is so. Now, shew me y^e Woman in England, Wales, or Ireland, who has already done so much Good as G. M. I will say more. Shew me one in all y^e English Annals, whom GOD has employ'd in so high a degree? I might say, In all y^e History of the Church, from y^e Death of our Lord to this day. This is no Hyperbole, but plain, demonstrable fact. And, if it be, who is so proper to be my Wife?

22. I cannot doubt but such a person being constantly with me (for she is both willing & able to accompany me in all my Journeys. Another Circumstance which is absolutely necessary in

21. "I never yet heard or read of any woman so owned of God," and from "Show me the woman in England . . ." to the end of section, struck out.

22. But for a few winter months annually spent in London and the neighbouring counties, John Wesley was steadily travelling all over the United Kingdom and Ireland.

such an Helper as I want.) w^d be so far from being a Hindrance to my Work, y^t she w^d remove many Hindrances out of y^e way. She w^d, in great measure, either prevent or remove, those bodily Weaknesses & Disorders, which now increase fast upon me. By caring for me, she w^d free me from a thousand cares, & enable me to serve GOD wth less Distraction. She is & w^d be a continual Defence (und^r GOD) agst unholy Desires & inordinate Affections: Which I never did entirely conquer, for six Months together, before my intercourse wth her. Now y^t 'tis "*κρείττον μᾶλλον γαμεῖν ἢ πυροῦσθαι*" is own'd. And Marriage being suppos'd, point out a properer Person.

23. But she w^d not only remove Hindrances. Such a Friend & Fellow-labour^r (I do not say probably w^d, but actually does) greatly assists & furthers me in my Work; inlivening my dull & dead Affections, composing & calming my hurried thoughts, sweetning my Spirits, whⁿ I am rough & harsh, & convincing me of what is true, or persuading me to what is right, when perhaps no other cou'd. At y^e same time, loosening my Soul from all below, & raising it up to GOD.

22. John Wesley was barely forty-six years old, and a man of wonderful activity. Yet, as a matter of fact, ever since his youth he had been suffering from chronic bilious catarrh, and had only kept in tolerable health by means of a very strict diet and constant exercise or hard riding.

Paul, 1 Cor. vii, 9: "It is better to marry than to burn." The defective spelling, especially of the last Greek word, in the original, seems to betray an illiterate hand.

24. She w^d likewise remove many Hindrances from others, from Women in particular. She w^d guard many from inordinate Affection for me, to which they w^d be far less expos'd, both because they w^d have far less Hope of Success, & because I sh^d converse far more sparingly with y^m. Perhaps not in private with any Young Women at all; at least not wth any Member of our own Societies.

25. And she might directly further the Work, by employing all her Grace & Gifts on that very thing: In regulating Female Classes & Bands: In examining, instructing, reproofing, comforting: In awakening Souls (under GOD), bringing them to y^e Faith & building them up therein. Therefore all my Seven Argum^{ts} agst Marriage, are totally set aside. Nay, some of them seem to prove, both that I ought to marry, & that G. M. is y^e Person.

26. But it is objected to this, I. That my marrying her w^d turn y^e greater Part of our Preachers out of y^e way: insomuch that they w^d despise my

24. "John Wesley and Charles are dangerous snares to many young women. Several are in love with them," a friend of theirs wrote as early as March 14, 1740 (Tyerman, *J. W.*, I, 298-299).

26. Whereas the Bands had, from the first, been an inner circle of Christian fellowship for mutual spiritual help and edification, the Classes had originally been devised to meet temporal necessities: the society being divided into little companies, about twelve in each class; one was to receive the contributions of the rest and bring it to the steward weekly. While collecting money it was found "such and such a one did not live as he ought." Wesley being informed, it struck him immediately: "This is the thing, the very thing we have wanted so long" for effectually

Authority, & act no more in conjunction wth me.

Secondly. That it w^d break up our Societies, & cause them to cry out, "Every man to his Tents, o Israël!"

Thirdly. That it w^d give such Scandal to the World, as never c^d be remov'd.

27. I cannot receive any one of these Propositions without Proof: Let us hear, then, the Reasons that support y^m:

The First is, "Because She is low-born." Her Parents were poor, labouring People.

I answer, "This weighs nothing wth me; as it does not prevent either her Grace or Gifts. Besides, whoever I marry, I believe it will not be a Gentlewoman; I despair of finding any such, so qualified."

28. The Second Reason is, "Because she was my Servant." I answer, "I therefore like her the better. By that means, intus et in cute novi. By living so long wth her under one Roof, I am as secure agst being deceiv'd in her, as I can well be agst being deceiv'd in any one. Indeed I sh^d scruple marrying any Woman, who had not done so for some time."

watching over each other, detecting disorderly walkers and hypocrites, and removing them out of the way. A leader had to see each person in his class once a week at least; to enquire how their souls prospered; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort them; to receive what they were willing to give toward the relief of the poor; to inform the minister of any that were sick or did not "live the gospel;" to pay to the stewards what he had received in the week preceding. Weekly meeting was soon substituted for house-

29. A Third Reason is, "She has travell'd wth me Six Months." With regard to this, I grant some w^d probably say, "She was my Mistress, before she was my Wife." And let them say this: It w^d hurt just as much as a thousand things they have said before. But let them know withall I sh^d never marry any Woman, till I had Proof that she both cou'd & wou'd travel wth me. It is my Belief, That, when these things were fairly represented, not only nineteen in twenty of our Preachers & Societies w^d be satisfied, but also y^e Reasonable Part of y^e World. And for y^e rest, the Good w^d outweigh that Evil.

30. But y^e Fourth and grand Reason is behind, "She is already engag'd to another."

I ask, "Where?" You say, "At Epworth"; J. B. then ask'd, "Will you marry me?" & She replied, "I will."

I grant it. But without insisting on numerous Circumstances, w^{ch} account for her Weakness in so doing, I insist only on One, She was contracted before. Therefore this Promise was null and void.

visiting. The leader of a band had to "speak his own state first; then to ask the rest, in order, as many and as searching questions as may be concerning their state, sins, and temptations." Men and women met separately, on different days (Wesley, *Works*, VIII, 252-254).

And that Contract was far stronger than this. At Epworth She only said, "I *will* take you," at Dublin She said, "I do."

"But before she went to Dublin, she consented in Derbyshire to J. B.'s Proposal."

I grant this also. But before that she had consented to my Proposal at Newcastle.

Therefore, what was done at Newcastle vacated a thing of y^e same kind done afterwards in Derbyshire. And y^e Contract *de præsenti* made at Dublin, vacated y^e Contract *de futuro* made at Epworth.

31. "But J. B. (this is y^e fifth Reason) will not believe this. Therefore he will expose you, as having married his Wife."

Perhaps he will believe it by & by. And I am willing to stay any Reasonable time, till he does. At least, there is reason to think, most others will believe it, when a fair State of y^e Case is laid before them.

32. But there is one Reason more, "You have said, & have printed, That you would never marry."

This is a mistake. I have never said any more, either in publick or private, than, "I do not

32. The *Thoughts on Marriage and a Single Life* had been published in 1743. A second edition came out the same year. In 1765 they were superseded by the *Thoughts on a Single Life* (in Vol. XXIV of the *Collected Works*, 1773). Conference met at the Chapel-House in Tower Street on Thursday, June 2, 1748, and

design to marry." And I said true. I did not design it, nor thought that I ever sh^d, when I said so. But the Reasons which I then had agst it, are now wholly removed.

I never said so much as this in print. Indeed I publish'd, "Thoughts on Marriage." But in our last Conference I was convinc'd They were not just; And accordingly I then alter'd them. And as to those words in the Appeal, "My Wife & Children are yet unborn," They imply no more by natural Construction, nor did I then intend any more thereby, than That I had neither Wife nor Children at that time, viz. in y^e year 1744.

The short is this, 1. "I have Scriptural Reason to marry. 2. I know no Person so proper as this."

32. The next Morning, my Brother spoke more warmly, till I left him & W. Shent together. I came back about One, & found they had both taken horse some hours before. I had appointed to preach y^e next night at Hineley hill. About Two I set out. My Horse being worn out, was

the following days. "So now I am supposed to be heaping up riches, that I may leave them behind me. *Leave them behind me!* For whom? My wife and children? Where are they? They are yet unborn" (*An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, 1744, *Works*, VIII, 39).

§ 32. The next morning was Tuesday, September 26, 1749, when Wesley left Whitehaven. This is again the main thread of his narrative, under the same number as the last head of Wesley's self-examination.

all in a sweat before he had gone a mile. And I was extremely weak myself, having had a Flux for several Days. But GOD was pleas'd to strengthen both Man & Beast, so that both grew better every hour.

33. I had a solemn & delightfull Ride to Keswick, having my mind stay'd on GOD. I took horse at $\frac{1}{2}$ hour past 3 in y^e Morning. There wa neither Moon nor Stars, but a thick Mist. So that I c^d see no Road, nor anything else. But I went as right as if it had been Noon-day. When I came near Penruddock Moor, y^e Mist vanish'd, y^e Stars appear'd, & y^e Dawn of the Morning. So I imagin'd all y^e Danger was past. But, when I was in y^e midst of y^e Moor, y^e Mist fell again on every side, & I quickly lost my way. I began praying. Immediatly it cleared up, & I recover'd y^e high Road. On Alston Moor, I mist my Way again, & (what I believe no Stranger ever did before) rode strait thro' all the Bogs, without any stop, till I came to y^e Vale, & thence to Hinely Hill.

§ 33. Penruddock: about half-way between Keswick and Penrith, north of Ullswater. Alston, on the South Tyne, about the same distance from Penrith to the north-east as Keswick is to the south-west. In July 1748, riding over the moors to Nint's Head, south-west from Allandale, Wesley had already visited "Alesden, a small market-town in Cumberland." Past Ouston Fell, the road runs along the right shore of the Carr's beck to the confluence of the East and West Allen, near Hindly Hill,

34. Hannah Broadwood (at whose House I left S. M.) met me at a little distance from it, & said, "Mr. Charles left us two hours since, & carried S. M. behind him." I said, "The Lord gave, & y^e Lord hath taken away! Blessed be y^e name of y^e Lord!" Soon after Ja^s Broadwood came in. He look'd at me, & burst into tears. I said, "I must go on to Newcastle." James said, "No, I will go, & wth GOD'S leave bring her back." In a quarter of an hour, he took horse, & I calmly committed y^e Cause to GOD!

35. A large Congregation met in y^e Evening. I expounded Part of y^e 20th c^r. of y^e Revelation. But O! what a time was this! It was as tho' we were already standing before y^e great white Throne! God was no less present with us in Prayer. When one just by me cried wth a loud & bitter Cry; I pray'd "God w^d give us a token that all these things sh^d work together for good." He did. He wrote Pardon upon her Heart. And we all rejoiced unto him wth reverence.

36. Thursday, y^e 28, was a Day which I set apart for seeking GOD by Fasting & Prayer. John Brown & B. Hopper were with me. It was a day

§ 34. "Ann" corrected by Wesley into "Hannah." C. Hopper was now staying at James Broadwood's, Hindly Hill (*Life*, 198-199). S.M.=Sister Murray. "The Lord gave . . ." Job i. 21-22.

§ 35. Revelation xx. 11-12, "and I saw a great white throne . . . and I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne."

§ 36. John Brown, a Tanfield Leigh farmer, converted on December 2, 1742, between four and five in the morning (J. W., *Journal*).

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never to be forgotten. I was calm, tho' sad, looking for Help from Him only, to whom all things are possible. We had all free Access to y^e Throne of Grace, & a sure Trust, That, "GOD w^d do all things well."

I now closely examin'd myself touching what was so confidently laid to my charge, viz. Inordinate affection. And this I clearly perceiv'd, That I had never before had so strong an Affection for any Person under Heaven. W^{ch} I c^d easily account for, by y^e Concurrence of so many little Streams in one. Gratitude for Blessings of various kinds w^{ch} God had given me by Her, Esteem upon many Accounts, Regard for my own Health both of Soul & Body; & Desire of enlarging y^e Work of GOD, all conspired wth a Conviction of her intire Love to me, to confirm & increase my Affection. But yet I cou'd not perceive it was inordinate by any of y^e Marks w^{ch} use to attend such an Affection. For, 1. Inordinate affection leads from GOD. But this continually led me to him. 2. Inord. Affec. makes us less desirous of doing y^e Works of GOD, less zealous to pray, preach, or do Good in any kind. But this increas'd my Desire of doing Good in every

In a fit of "enthusiasm" he came riding through Newcastle, "hallooing & shouting, & driving all the people before him, telling them God had told him he should be a King. . . ." Wesley sent him home to his work, and advised him to pray for a lowly heart. In July, 1743, he had removed to the Lower Spen, seven or eight miles south-west from Newcastle, and convinced many of his neighbours. On November 22, 1744, Charles Wesley was surprised at their number. In 1746 Brown settled at New-

kind, & my Zeal to do all y^e Works of GOD. 3. Inord. Aff. makes us cold & dead, in preaching, praying, or any other Office of Religion. But this made me more alive in all: More Sensible of y^e Power & Presence of GOD. 4. Inord. Aff. creates Jealousy tow^d Rivals & Resentment tow^d them that oppose it. But I never felt a Minute's Jealousy, even of J. B., nor a minute's Resentment tow^d those who tore her from me. 5. Inord. Aff. necessarily creates Uneasiness in the Absence of y^e Object of it. Whereas I never was uneasy, neither *in* parting, nor *after* it; no more than if she had been a Common Person. For all these Reasons (& I might mention several more) I c^d not conceive, That mine was an Inord. Affec. Unless it was *such* an Inord. Affection, as never was before from y^e beginning of the World.

37. I need add no more, then that if I had had more Regard for her I loved, than for y^e Work of God, I sh^d now have gone on strait to Newcastle, & not back to Whitehaven. I knew this was giving up all: But I knew GOD call'd: And therefore, on Frid. 29, set out. The Storm was full

lings or Newlands, south of Prudhoe, on the borders of Durham, where he likewise "gathered a flock & suffered greatly for their sake" (*C.W.*, November 13). "O what may not a man of small natural talents do, if he be full of faith and love!" John Wesley remarks (*Journal*, March 24, 1747). In 1749 he was busy with Hopper evangelizing the people about Weardale, most employed in the lead mines (*Works*, XIII, 372).

§ 37. Hatside Height: north of the road from Alston to Penrith, west of Gilderdale Forest, nearly opposite Long Crag, where the

in my face, & exceeding high, so that I had much difficulty to sit my Horse: Particularly as I was riding over y^e broad, bare backs of those enormous Mountains. However, I kept on as I cou'd, till I came to y^e Brow of Hatside. So thick a Fog then fell, that I was soon out of all Road, & knew not which way to turn. I lifted up my Heart. The Fog vanish'd in a mom^t, & I saw Gamblesby, to which I was going. I set out early on Sat. 30, & in the Afternoon reach'd Whitehaven. To day I resum'd my spare Diet, which I shall probably quit no more.

38. Sund. Oct. 1. I was in great Heaviness, my Heart was sinking in me like a Stone. Only, so long as I was preaching I felt ease. When I had done, y^e weight return'd. I went to Church sorrowfull & very heavy, tho' I knew not any particular Cause. And GOD found me there. Not only y^e Lessons, both Morning & Afternoon, containing the Acc^t of y^e Three Children in y^e Fiery Furnace, of Daniel in y^e Lions' Den, & of our Lord's walking on y^e Water & calming y^e Storm, seem'd all design'd for me: But even the Psalms which were sung all the day. I found

road bends from westward to southward. Gamblesby: a village south-west of Long Crag, on the road from Renwick to Melmerby, Langwathby, and Penrith.

On Wesley's vegetable diet see *Journal*, May 5, August 1, December 29, 1748. When in love with Sophy Hopkey in Savannah, he had also offered to renounce fasting (Tyerman, I, 149).

§ 38. Daniel, c. iii, children in the furnace; c. vi, lions' den. John vi, 16-21.

likewise much refreshm^t in y^e Sacram^t. When I came home, I took up a Common Prayer book, & open'd upon these words: "Deliver me not over unto the will of mine adversaries; for there are false witnesses risen up ag^t me, & such as speak wrong. I sh^d utterly have fainted; but that I believe verily to see y^e goodness of y^e Lord in y^e land of the living. O tarry thou y^e Lord's leisure; be strong, & he shall comfort thy Heart, & put thou thy trust in y^e Lord." Ps. xxvii, 14, &c.

39. In y^e Evening, my Heaviness return'd, but wth much of y^e Spirit of Prayer. It seem'd to me, that I ought not to linger here; & yet I knew not whither to go: Till Mr. P. ask'd, Will you go to Leeds on Tuesd.? Immediatly my mind was easy. I had sent notice of being there on Wedn. Evening, but it was gone out of my thoughts. I determin'd to go. Only I was concern'd, to leave Whitehaven without a Preacher.

40. We then pour'd out our Hearts before GOD. And I was led, I know not how to ask, That if he saw good, he w^d shew me what w^d be y^e end of these things, in dreams or visions of y^e night. I dream'd I saw a Man bring out

§ 39. Mr. P. = Charles Perronet, who had already been travelling with John in 1747 and 1748.

§ 41. Joseph Cownley (June, 1723–October, 1792), of Leominster, Herefordshire, travelling secretary to a J.P., happened to hear Wesley at Bath. Enlightened. In 1743, gave up his situation; member of a little society at Leominster. 1746, reckoned among the assistants. 1747: Plymouth, July and August; Bristol, September and October; November and December, Newcastle, in

G. M., who told her, she was condemn'd to die: And that all things were now in readiness, for the Execution of that Sentence. She spoke not one word, nor shew'd any Reluctance, but walk'd up wth him to y^e place. The Sentence was executed, without her stirring either hand or foot. I look'd at her, till I saw her face turn black. Then I c^d not bear it, but went away. But I return'd quickly, & desir'd she might be cut down. She was then laid upon a bed. I sat by mourning over her. She came to herself & began to speak, & I awaked.

41. Monday, 2. I dedicated to God, in Fasting & solemn Prayer. We had free Access to y^e Throne of Grace, & I found my Will more resign'd. In y^e Evening, Jos. Cownly came, & brought me a Letter from Mr. Whitefield, pressing me much, To meet my Brother & him, at Leeds, on Wedn. Even^g. My Brother had likewise charged J. C., "If I w^d not come, to come hither himself."

42. Tuesday 3rd, we rode to Old-hutton, & ab^t 9

which circuit he is said to have spent sixteen months. He had returned to Newcastle on Monday, September 25, 1749, after Wesley, at his pressing instances, had set out for Whitehaven (Stampe, 88-95; J. Wesley, *Journal*).

George Whitefield (December, 1714-September 30, 1770), one of the Oxford Methodists, and the first to venture upon field-preaching in 1739. Crossed the Atlantic thirteen times and spent much of his time and zeal in America. He had come back from his first visit there in 1748, and being introduced to Lady Huntingdon (1707-1791) in July, was now about to form with her the Evangelical Party in the Church of England and to develop Calvinistic Methodism. In September, 1749, he had been invited to Wesley's societies around Leeds. Charles, whom he met on his way to Newcastle, introduced him to the pulpit there.

the next night reach'd Leeds. Here I found, not my Brother, but Mr. Whitefield. I lay down by him on y^e bed. He told me, "My Brother w^d not come, till J. B. & G. M. were married." I was troubled. He perceiv'd it. He wept & pray'd over me. But I c^d not shed a Tear. He said all that was in his power to comfort me: But it was in vain. He told me, "It was his Judgm^t y^t she was MY Wife, & that he had said so to J. B.: That he w^d fain have persuad^d them to wait, & not to marry till they had seen me: But that my Brother's Impetuosity prevail'd & bore down all before it."

43. I felt no murmuring thought, but deep Distress. I accepted y^e just Punishm^t of my manifold Unfaithfulness & Unfruitfulness, & therefore c^d not complain. But I felt y^e Loss both to me & y^e People, w^{ch} I did not expect c^d ever be repair'd. I tried to sleep: but I tried in vain; for Sleep was fled from my Eyes. I was in a burning Fever, & more & more Thoughts still crouding into my Mind, I perceiv'd, if this continued long, it w^d affect my Senses. But GOD took that matter into his Hand; giving me on a sudden, sound & quiet sleep.

§ 42. Old-hutton, "above fifty miles from Whitehaven." Probably Hutton Bridge End, Westmorland, south of Kendal, about seven miles N.N.W. from Kirby Lonsdale, fifteen south-east from Ambleside, which is thirty miles from Whitehaven as the crow flies. Fairly straight course along valley of Liza, across Sty Head Pass, and Rydal Stream or Millbeck (see *Journal*, April 13, 1751; April 7-10, 1753). The next day the ride to Leeds (sixty or seventy miles) was "a long day's journey, finding us full employ from five in the morning till eight at night."

§ 43. "crouded" corrected into "crouding" by Wesley.

44. Thurs. 5. about 8. One came in from Newcastle, & told us, "They were married on Tuesday." My Brother came an hour after. I felt no Anger. Yet I did not desire to see him. But Mr. Wh. constrain'd me. After a few Words had past, He accosted me with, "I renounce all intercourse with you, but what I w^d have wth an heathen man or a publican." I felt little Emotion. It was only adding a drop of water to a drowning man. Yet I calmly accepted his Renunciation, & acquiesced therein. Poor Mr. Wh. & J. Nelson burst into Tears. They pray'd, cried, & intreated, till y^e Storm past away. We c^d not speak, but only fell on each other's neck.

45. J. B. then came in. Neither of us c^d speak. But we kist each other & wept. Soon after, I talk'd with my Brother alone. He seem'd utterly amaz'd. He clearly saw, I was not what he had thought, & now blamed her only: Which confirmed me in believing, My Presage was true, & I sh^d see her face no more.

§ 44. St. Andrew's parish, Newcastle, Tuesday, October 3: the Rev. John Bennet, of Chinley, near Chapel en le Frith, Derbyshire, married Grace Murray, in the presence of the Rev. G. Whitefield and the Rev. C. Wesley. Soon after, Bennet began to criticize the discipline of Mr. Wesley's Societies (Tyerman, *J. W.*, II, 42-43, June 29, 1750). On December 3, 1752, at Bolton, charging him with Popery, "I have not been in connexion with him these three years," he said, "neither will I be any more." In 1754 he had a meeting-house erected at Warbuton, Cheshire, preaching also in the neighbourhood. He died of the jaundice on May 24, 1759, after thirty-six weeks' illness, leaving five sons, the eldest of whom was not eight years old. His widow settled again at Chapel en le Frith, and re-entered into society with "the people called Methodists." She died on February 23, 1803.

§ 44. Cryptic signs borrowed from Byrom's system of shorthand,

46. But y^e great Mystery to me was this. By what means under heaven, c^d she (who I knew, whatever others thought, had for Ten Years loved me as her own Soul) be prevail'd upon to marry another? Especially after so solemn a Contract with me. I cou'd not unravel it till I read my Brother's Papers: What I learn'd from them (& some others) was this.

47. Her Mind was quite settled when I left her at Hineley Hill, nor had she any more thought of J. B. than of Jn^o Jones. On Sat. Sunday & Monday was the same. On Monday she wrote to S. Proctor in these words. "If Mr. B. comes to Newcastle, write to me immediatly; for I must not see him. It will tear my Soul to pieces: Seeing I can by no means help him now. For whom GOD hath join'd together, no man can put asunder. And well I am assured, that it was his Will it sh^d be so. Glory be to GOD, I find him mightily present with me. My Soul is athirst for GOD & y^e Good of Souls. I find my former Zeal return'd. I trust I shall be more bold in y^e Cause

which Wesley adopted in Georgia. Apparently mean, "You are a felon" or "a villain."

§ 47. "John Jones (late a zealous Calvinist) preached for the first time at the Foundery" on Sunday, November 30, 1746. Invited to Conference 1747, when reckoned among the Assistants; 1748, appointed to teach languages at Kingswood School (Bennet's *Minutes*, 39, 49, 56).

of X^t than ever.—The Lord hath brought strange things to pass; what I never look'd for. Praise the Lord, O my Soul, who hath cast thy Lot in a fair Ground!"

On Tues. 26. She was much in Prayer, & appear'd exceeding thankfull to GOD, & more & more fixt every Hour, to live & die with me.

48. On Wedn. 27. She was exceedingly troubled at my Letter from Whitehaven. Hannah Broadwood c^d in no wise comfort her; but it threw her into vehement Prayer. About Eleven my Brother came. He kist her, & said, "G. M. You have broke my Heart." Then he dropt down. It is easy to conceive what impression this must make, on so tender a mind as Her's. Soon after he put into her hands the following Letter, wrote the day before:

"My dear Sister & Friend,

What shall I say to
you? I w^d not willingly grieve *you*, tho' you have
well nigh broke my Heart: And still you will be
y^e occasion of bringing down my Hairs wth Sorrow

§ 46-48. Note how thoroughly Wesley seems to have subsequently enquired into the facts.

§ 48. "Ann" corrected into "Hannah," "wrote the day before" added, in Wesley's handwriting.

Charles Wesley, after attending his brother and Grace Murray to London in August, had gone back to fetch his wife at Ludlow, and taken her to Bristol on September 1. Here John's letter to Bennet, dated September 7, must have reached him about the middle of the month. On September 29, after staying at Leeds, he was in Newcastle with Whitefield. "In my way hither," Whitefield writes to Lady Huntingdon, "I met Mr. Charles

to y^e Grave. Neither my Soul nor my Body will ever recover y^e Wound ; in this Life I mean. But *there* y^e weary are at rest ; there all tears are wiped away from our eyes.

“ Fain w^d I hope, that you can say something in your defence (when I come to talk with you) which now I know not. But the Case thus appears to me.

“ You promis’d J. B. to marry him—Since w^{ch}, you engaged yourself to another.

“ How is this possible ? And who is that other ? One of such Importance, that his doing so dishonest an Action, w^d destroy both himself, & me, & y^e whole Work of GOD. It was on y^e very brink of ruin : but y^e Snare is broken, & we are deliver’d. I am returning with my Brother strait to London. But c^d not leave y^e Country without writing to you. Still I *will* suspend my Judgm^t, in that Love w^{ch} hopeth all things. But O ! how humbled, how thankful ought you to be, at your almost miraculous Deliverance ! Had not y^e Lord restrain’d you, what a Scandal had you brought upon y^e Gospel ; nay, & you w^d have left your

Wesley, who returned, and introduced me to the pulpit” (October 1, Tyerman, *G. Wh.*, II, 234). Charles, who was still at Bristol on September 15, had, from Newcastle, joined his brother at Whitehaven, on Monday, September 25. To Newcastle he rode back with William Shent on Tuesday 26, stopping on his way at Hineley Hill, where Grace Murray was staying with Hannah Broadwood. And he went away with her early on Wednesday afternoon.

The almost ludicrous way in which he speaks of John as “one of such Importance . . .” shows how sincerely and earnestly devoted he was both to his brother and to the “work of God.” It is

Name as a Curse upon GOD'S People. But I spare you, & hope in Ignorance you did it. Be not therefore troubled overmuch. I never intend to speak an harsh word to you about it; but pray for you & love you; till we meet at y^e Marriage Supp^r of y^e Lamb."

49. She must have been more than Human, if this Letter deliver'd with such Circumstances, had not wrought y^e desir'd Effect. Especially as she supposed, it was wrote when I was by, & therefore contain'd *my* Judgm^t as well as his. So all Hope of *me* was utterly cut off. I was "returning strait to London with my Brother." I was supposed, to have seen us both on "y^e very brink of ruin; to rejoyce, that the Snare was broken, & to join in exhorting her to be thankfull, for our almost miraculous Deliverance!"

What wonder then, that when he ask'd, "Are you willing to go with me to Leeds, to meet my Brother & J. B. there?" She sh^d readily consent? Particularly, as she believ'd, That it was all by my own Appointment.

very important to note that the success of John's providential mission was indeed the paramount consideration with Charles, and that there is nothing overdrawn or insincere in the kind feelings he professes for Grace Murray, whom he had known and prized for over seven years, and with whom he remained on very friendly terms afterwards.

50. About One, he took her behind him, & set out. At first he design'd to go by way of Newcastle. But being afraid every moment, that I was just at his heels, he used several Stratagems to elude his pursuer, & at last turn'd out of y^e Newcastle Road, & made strait for Durham. But in a little time they lost y^e way, & so were glad to lodge at Jn^o Brown's at Newlands.

She appear'd very chearful when they came in; but it was not so, when she was retired. For she did not sleep all Night, but lay tumbling & tossing to & fro, as one in deep Distress.

51. Upon y^e supposition, that she loved J. B. best, this was utterly unintelligible. For what c^d she desire more? She was going, with my full Consent, to marry him immediatly. But upon y^e contrary Supposition, the Mixture of Chearfulness & Sadness is easy to be understood. Looking on y^e things that were past in y^e same Light with my Brother, & now believing She really belong'd to J. B. & that by giving herself up to him, she sh^d at once clear her Conscience, preserve one she tenderly lov'd from Ruin, & prevent so

§ 50. From Hineley Hill, the shortest way would have been through Hexham to Newcastle. Charles may have turned out of it near Stocksfield, whence some roads lead south-east to Durham, but their windings are rather intricate. At Newlands, south of Prudhoe, on the borders of Northumberland and Durham, farmer John Brown had been settled since 1746.

many dreadfull Consequences: She rejoiced & sung Praise, as having escaped out of a Snare, & found a great Deliverance. But still, she c^d not prevent many Doubts, Whether she belong'd to him or no? Nor probably, some Fears, That all things had not been fairly represented to her. Above all, Her Love to me, together with y^e remembrance of many things which had past between us, wou'd sometimes return, quash all her Joy, & be as a Sword piercing her Heart.

52. In y^e Morning they rode on to Ferry-hill; & were inform'd, "J. B. was at Newc^e." She chearfully said, "Let us go; let us go to him." But my Brother being inform'd, "He w^d have nothing to do with her": dropt her at Mr. Bell's, two miles short of y^e Town, & went forward himself, to reconcile him to her.

53. The way by which he endeavour'd this, was by laying all y^e blame upon *me*, as having used my whole Art & Authority, to seduce another Man's Wife. This was y^e Scope of all his Dis-

§ 52. Ferry Hill: six miles south of Durham, on the way to Yorkshire, was one of the regular stages on the high road from London to Berwick, through Sunderland, Durham suburbs, Chester in the street, Gateshead, and Newcastle. It is often mentioned in the Wesleys' Journals. Unless there is a mistake in the text, or it refers to another place of the same name, some way up-stream between Prudhoe and Newcastle, Charles must have tried some more "stratagems," riding about fifty miles on that day.

§ 53. Matthew Errington, of Houghton-le-Spring, Durham, had accompanied J. Wesley on his first visit to Newcastle, having been induced to attend the Foundery service on February 4, 1741,

courses at Newcastle. The Effect of what He & J. B. said (for they spoke just alike) was, that all in y^e House (unless one or two that were instant in prayer) were set on fire, fill'd wth anger & confusion & driven to their wits end. S. Proctor w^d leave y^e House immediatly. Jn^o Whitford w^d preach wth Mr. W. no more. Mat. Errington dream'd, y^e House itself was all in flames (& most certainly it was). Another Dreamer went a Step farther, & saw Mr. W. in hell-fire. Jane Keith was peremptory "Jn^o W. is a child of y^e Devil": Coming pretty near J. B. himself; whose repeated word was, "If Jn^o W. is not damn'd, there is no God."

54. When J. B. was so clearly convinc'd, "the fault lay all in *me*," G. M. & he were brought together. She fell at his Feet, acknowledg'd she had used him ill, & beg'd He w^d forgive her. To satisfy her entirely, as to any Scruple which might remain wth regard to me, One was brought in, to assure her, "I had given her up, & w^d have nothing more to say to her. Only I had order'd him to

a national fast day, after which he ran about London to hear Wesley again in two or three places the same day. He gave up a considerable situation, to remove to the Foundery, as the Preachers' servant. In 1742-1743 he set out on foot for Cornwall with Thomas Meyrick. In 1749 he had settled at the Newcastle Orphan-House, where he remained forty years, until his death (W. Stampe, 8-9).

procure some place among y^e Country Societies, where she might live privately." Upon this, one cried out, "Good GOD! What will y^e world say? He is tired of her, & so thrusts his Wh—— into a Corner. Sister M., will you consent to this!" She answer'd, "No, I will die first." So, seeing no other way, She frankly declar'd, "I will have J. B., if he will have me."

55. On Tues. morning, Oct. 3, they were married. They all then rode on contentedly to Leeds, to give me the Meeting there, as well that I might have y^e pleasure of seeing y^e Bride, as "that I might acknowledge my Sin" (those were my Brother's Expressions) before J. B. & them all.

56. But this I was not altogether ready to do. Neither did I apprehend she desired my Company any more: Till on Friday Oct. 6 I was inform'd, "Both J. B. & his Wife desired to see me." I went, But O! what an Interview! It was not soon, y^t Words c^d find their way. We sat weeping at each other, till I ask'd her, "What did you say to my Brother, to make him accost me thus?" She fell at my Feet: said "She never had spoke, nor c^d

§ 56. Thursday, October 5, Wesley preached at Birstal. Friday 6. "I preached at 5, & then returned to my brother, whom I had left at Leeds. At noon we spent an hour with several of our Preachers, in exhortation & prayer. About one, I preached to a crowded audience. . . . Sun. 8. I preached in Leeds at seven, & between one & two began preaching at Birstal, but my voice (though I think it had not been stronger for some years) would not reach two-thirds of the congregation." On Saturday, October 7, he wrote to

“speak against me:” uttering many other words to y^e same effect, in y^e midst of numberless Sighs & Tears. Before she rose, he fell on his knees too, & ask’d my pardon for what he had spoken of me. Between them both, I knew not what to say or do. I can forgive. But who can redress the Wrong?

57. After dinner I talk’d wth her alone. She aver’d with y^e utmost emotion, being all dissolv’d in tears, “That she never laid y^e blame on me, whom she knew to be wholly innocent: That she w^d rather die than speak agst one, to whom she had so deep obligations. That at y^e time I first spoke to her at Newcastle, she loved me above all persons living: That after her Engagem^t with J. B. her Heart was divided till she went to Ireland: That then it was whole with me, & from that time, till J. B. met us at Epworth: That after his speaking she was divided again, till I talk’d with her on y^e Road; from which hour she loved me more & more, till we parted at Hineley-Hill:

Thomas Bigg, of Newcastle, as follows: “My dear Brother, A loving husband is a very amiable character. A fond one, I think, is not so. But if I had a wife, I believe I should be the latter, and perhaps you may lean to the same extreme. To you, therefore, I can freely speak my mind. . . . The fatal, irrecoverable stroke was struck on Thursday last. Yesterday I saw my friend, (that was) and him to whom she is sacrificed. I believe you never saw such a scene. But, ‘why should a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins?’ I am yours affectionately” (*Works*, XIII, 162–163). Meanwhile, the Rev. Vincent Perronet was entreating Charles to soothe his sorrow, and pour nothing but oil and wine into his wounds (Watson, V, 200).

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That, when my Brother took her thence, she thought he was carrying her to me: That, when she knew more of his Design, she told him, "I will do nothing, till I have seen Mr. W": But that when it was told her at Newcastle, among a thousand other things, "Mr. W. will have nothing to say to you;" then she said, "Well, I will have Mr. B. if he will have me." If these things are so, hardly has such a Case been from y^e beginning of y^e World!

A short Acc^t of y^e whole, I drew up a few days after, in y^e following Lines.

In riding between Leeds and Newcastle.

1. O Lord, I bow my sinfull Head!
Righteous are all thy ways wth Man!
Yet suffer me with Thee to plead,
With lowly reverence to complain;
With deep, unutter'd Grief to groan,
O what is this that Thou hast done!
2. Oft as thro' giddy Youth I rov'd,
And danc'd along the flowry way
By Chance or thoughtless Passion mov'd,
An easy, unsuspecting Prey
I fell, while Love's envenom'd Dart
Thrill'd thro' my Veins, & tore my Heart.

A fragment of a rough copy in Wesley's handwriting, at the end of the MS., affords a few variants.

3. At length, by sad Experience taught,
Firm I shook off the abject Yoke ;
Abhor'd his sweetly-poisonous Draught,
Thro' all his wily Fetters broke :
Fixt my Desires on things above,
And languisht for Celestial Love.
4. Born on y^e wings of Sacred Hope
Long had I soar'd, & spurn'd y^e Ground ;
When panting for the Mountain-top
My Soul a kindred Spirit found :
By Heaven intrusted to my Care,
The Daughter of my Faith and Prayer.
5. In early Dawn of Life, Serene,
Mild, sweet & tender was her Mood :
Her pleasing Form spoke all within
Soft and compassionately good :
Listning to every Wretches' Care,
Mixing with each her friendly Tear.
6. In Dawn of Life, to feed y^e Poor
Glad she her little All bestow'd :
Wise to lay up a better Store,
And hasting to be rich in GOD ;
GOD whom she sought with early Care,
With reverence and with lowly Fear.

st. 3. By years and sad . . . My Soull shook off . . . Abhor'd
th' intoxicating Draught.

st. 4 : My Soul her Kindred Spirit found.

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7. E'er twice four years past o'er her Head,
Her infant Breast wth Love He fill'd,
His glorious, gracious Name reveal'd,
And sweetly forc'd her Heart to yield,
She groan'd to ascend Heaven's high Abode,
To die into the Arms of GOD !
8. Yet warm with Youth & Beauty's Pride,
Soon was her heedless Soul betray'd ;
From Heaven her footsteps turn'd aside,
O'er Pleasure's flowry Plains she stray'd :
Fondly the Toys of Earth she sought,
And GOD was not in all her thought.
9. Not long. A Messenger she saw
Sent forth glad Tidings to proclaim :
She heard, with Joy and wondring Awe
His Cry : " Sinners, behold the Lamb ! "
His Eye her inmost Nature shook,
His Word her Heart in pieces broke.
10. Her bosom heav'd with labouring Sighs,
And groan'd the unutterable Prayer ;
As Rivers from her streaming Eyes
Fast flow'd the never-ceasing Tear,
Till Jesus spake, " Thy Mourning is o'er !
Believe ! Rejoice ! & weep no more."

st. 7. " Her infant Breast wth power he fill'd,
His Glorious, Gracious Name displayed."
A more accurate rhyme than the perhaps mistaken text.

11. She heard : Pure Love her Soul o'erflow'd
 Sorrow & Sighing fled away :
 With sacred Zeal her Spirit glow'd :
 Panting His every Word to obey,
 Her Faith by plenteous Fruit she shew'd,
 And all her Works were wrought in GOD.

12. Nor Works alone her Faith approv'd :
 Soon in Affliction's Furnace tried
 By him whom next to Heaven she lov'd,
 As Silver seven times purified,
 Shone midst y^e Flames her constant Mind,
 Emerg'd, & left the Dross behind.

13. When Death, in freshest Strength of Years
 Her much-lov'd Friend tore from her Breast
 A while she pour'd her Complaints & Tears ;
 But quickly turning to her Rest
 Thy Will be done ! She meekly cried :
 Suffice, for me the Saviour died.

14. When first I view'd with fixt Regard
 Her artless Tears in silence flow,
 " For thee are better things prepar'd,
 I said : Go forth, with Jesus go !
 My Master's Peace be on thy Soul,
 Till perfect Love shall make thee whole."

st. 13. " Her best-loved," substituted for " her dearest . . ."

15. But O ! what Trials are in store
 For those whom GOD delights to bless :
 Abandon'd soon to Satan's power
 Sifted as wheat, from the Abyss
 The lowest Deep she groan'd aloud ;
 Where is my Joy, my Hope, my GOD ?
16. In Chains of horrid Darkness bound,
 Torn by y^e Dogs of Hell she lay ;
 By Fear & Sin encompast round,
 Anguish & Pain & huge Dismay,
 Till y^e loud, bitter Cry outbroke,
 " My GOD, why hast thou me forsook ? "
17. Yet bowing down her fainting Head,
 And sinking to the Gulf beneath,
 She flew to every Sinner's Aid,
 To snatch him from y^e second Death :
 " Tho' justly I am lost, She cried,
 " Live thou ! For thee the Saviour died. "
18. But, when again his Glory shone,
 When GOD anew unveil'd his Face,
 What heavenly Zeal, what Love unknown,
 What strong, unutter'd Tenderness,
 For every Soul her Heart o'erflow'd !
 What longing to be spent for GOD !

19. I saw her run, with winged Speed
In Works of Faith and labouring Love :
I saw her glorious Toil succeed,
And Showers of Blessings from above
Crowning her warm effectual Prayer,
And glorified my GOD in her.
20. Yet while to all, her tender Mind
In Streams of pure Affection flow'd,
To One, by Ties peculiar join'd,
One only less belov'd than GOD,
"Myself, she said, my Soul I owe,
My Guardian Angel here below !"
21. From Heaven the grateful Ardor came,
Pure from y^e Dross of low Desire :
Well-pleas'd I mark'd the guiltless Flame,
Nor dar'd to damp the sacred Fire ;
Heaven's Choicest Gift on Man bestow'd,
Strengthening our Hearts & Hands in GOD.
22. 'Twas now I bow'd my aching Head,
While Sickness shook y^e House of Clay :
Dutueous she ran with humble Speed,
Love's tenderest Offices to pay ;
To ease my Pain, to soothe my Care,
To uphold my feeble Hands in Pray'r.

23. Amaz'd I cried, "Surely for me
 An Help prepar'd of Heaven thou art !
 Thankfull I take the Gift from Thee,
 O Lord, nor ought on Earth shall part
 The Souls whom thou hast join'd above
 In lasting Bonds of sacred Love."
24. Abash'd She spake, "O what is this,
 Far above all my boldest Hope !
 Can GOD, beyond my utmost Wish,
 Thus lift his worthless Handmaid up ?
 This only c^d my Soul desire :
 This only (had I dar'd) require."
25. From that glad Hour, with growing Love,
 Heaven's latest, dearest Gift I view'd :
 While, pleas'd each Moment to improve,
 We urg'd our way with Strength renew'd,
 Our one Desire, our common Aim,
 To extol our gracious Master's Name.
26. Companions now in Weal and Woe,
 No Power on Earth c^d us divide :
 Nor Summer's Heat, nor wintry Snow
 Could tear my Partner from my side ;
 Nor Toil, nor Weariness, nor Pain,
 Nor Horrors of the angry Main.
27. Oft, (tho' as yet the Nuptial Tie
 Was not), clasping her Hand in mine,
 What Force, she said, beneath y^e Sky,
 Can now our well-knit Souls disjoin ?
 With Thee I'd go to India's Coast,
 To Worlds in distant Ocean lost !"

28. Such was the Friend than Life more dear
Whom in one luckless balefull Hour,
(For ever mention'd with a Tear)
The Tempest's unresisted Power,
(O the unutterable Smart !)
Tore from my inly-bleeding Heart.
29. Unsearchable thy Judgments are,
O Lord, a bottomless Abyss !
Yet sure thy Love, thy guardian Care,
O'er all thy Works extended is.
O why didst thou the Blessing send ?
Or why thus snatch away my Friend ?
30. What thou hast done I know not now !
Suffice I shall hereafter know !
Beneath thy chastning Hand I bow :
That still I live to Thee I owe.
O teach thy deeply-humbled Son
To say, " Father, thy Will be done ! "
31. Teach me, from every pleasing Snare
To keep the Issues of my Heart :
Be thou my Love, my Joy, my Fear !
Thou my eternal Portion art.
Be thou my never-failing Friend,
And love, O love me to the End !

JOHN WESLEY'S MARRIAGE AND CHARACTER

I

JOHN'S WIFE AND CHARLES WESLEY

JOHN WESLEY'S disappointed love, while primarily appealing to the student of psychology, is far from destitute of historical importance: both by way of mental impressions and outward consequences, it told permanently, not only on Wesley's own private life, but on the subsequent course of Methodism at large.

"My dear Friend,—I snatch a few moments before the people come, to tell you what you will rejoice to know,—that the Lord is reviving his work as at the beginning; that multitudes are daily added to his church; and that G[eorge] W[hitefield], and my brother, and I are one, a threefold cord which shall no more be broken."

In these words was Charles addressing his wife from Sheffield, on October 8, 1749 (*C. W.*, II, 178).

"For ten years," his brother had been writing to Mr. Thomas Bigg, of Newcastle, the very day before, "God has been preparing a fellow-labourer for me, by a wonderful train of Provi-

dences. . . . But we were soon afterwards torn asunder by a whirlwind. . . . The waves arose again since I came out of London. I fasted and prayed, and strove all I could ; but the sons of Zeruiah were too hard for me.¹ The whole world fought against me ; but above all, my own familiar friend."²

However sincere his statement that he "never felt a minute's resentment towards those who tore her" from him, this fighting he could not altogether forget.

Ever since Charles's entering Christ Church College, in June, 1726, they had been fellow-labourers in the same work of God, first as leading members of the Oxford "Holy Club," next as Gospel missionaries in Georgia, lastly as joint heads of the Methodist United Societies in Great Britain. Henceforth some lurking grudge was to loosen their partnership, to embitter their brotherly intercourse, as will clearly appear from the tone of John's letters.

Another unfortunate event, sixteen months later, helped in making the chasm wider between them. "Having received a full answer from Mr. P[erronet]," John notes in his Diary under February 2, 1751, "I was clearly convinced that I ought to marry. For many years I remained single, because I believed I could be more useful in a single, than in a married state. And I praise God, who enabled me so to do. I now as fully

¹ 2 Samuel iii. 39.

² *Works*, XIII, 163.

believed, that in my present circumstances, I might be more useful in a married state; into which, upon this clear conviction, and by the advice of my friends, I entered a few days after" (*Journal*, II, 222).

This time Charles does not seem to have been consulted. Under the same date, he writes: "My brother, returned from Oxford, sent for and told me *he was resolved to marry!* I was thunder-struck, and could only answer, he had given me the first blow, and his marriage would come like the *coup de grâce*. Trusty Ned Perronet followed, and told me the person was Mrs. Vazeille! one of whom I had never had the least suspicion . . ." (II, 78).

The daughter of a London merchant, Mr. Goldhawk, she had married Anthony Vazeille, also a London merchant, and the son of a Huguenot refugee. Hence, apparently, her acquaintance with the family of the Rev. Vincent Perronet, whose father was likewise naturalized in 1708. At Edward Perronet's, in July, 1749, Charles first came across her, "a woman of a sorrowful spirit" (II, 62), a widow with three or four children. On May 15th following he set out with her from Bristol for a nine days' stay at Ludlow, where his wife and friends "showed her all the civility and love that they could show: and she seemed equally pleased with them" (II, 71). Then they started together, Mrs. Vazeille and Sally being carried in a chaise, and Charles riding by them, from

Worcester to Evesham. They saw Blenheim on their way to Oxford, and Charles took them over the University buildings and gardens. On June 2 they took up their quarters for eight or nine days in London at Mrs. Vazeille's.

So she was no stranger to him. A keen discerner of personal character, was it owing to this very knowledge of her, or simply under a deep concern for the reviving work of God, that he lamented over his brother's choice, as reported to him by Edward Perronet? "I refused his company to the chapel, and retired to mourn with my faithful Sally. I groaned all the day, and several following ones, under my own and the people's burden. I could eat no pleasant food, nor preach, nor rest, either by night or by day" (II, 78). On Sunday, February 17, he preached on those words, "Thy sun shall no more go down, etc." The whole congregation seemed infected by his sorrow; they wept and made supplication together (II, 78, 79).

In the afternoon, at the Foundery, he heard "his brother's apology." The Sunday before, while John was coming back from Snowsfield, on the middle of London Bridge, both his feet slipped on the ice, and he fell with great force, the bone of his ankle lighting on the top of a stone. He had it bound up after preaching, and made a shift to walk to Seven-Dials chapel. But, the sprain growing worse, he had to go back in a coach, and removed to Threadneedle Street, that is, at Mrs.

Vazeille's, where he "spent the remainder of the week, partly in prayer, reading, and conversation, partly in writing an *Hebrew Grammar* and *Lessons for Children*" (II, 223). For the last few months he had been busy preparing text-books for the use of the children at Kingswood school (cf. II. 209-210). More surprising than this ante-nuptial employment had been the speech which he delivered to the single men on February 6, showing them "on how many accounts it was good for those who had received that gift from God, to remain 'single for the kingdom of heaven's sake'; unless where a particular case might be an exception to the general rule." Perhaps a first edition of his apology.

The marriage was solemnized, probably by Charles Manning, vicar of Hayes, on February 18, according to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, or February 19, according to the *London Magazine*. As a matter of fact, had he not been unable to set his foot to the ground, Monday 18 was the second day John Wesley had appointed for the northward journey which he had been compelled to postpone on the 10th. However, several days afterwards Charles "was one of the last that heard of his unhappy marriage" (II, 79).

The following set of entries in his *Journal* disclose on what terms he even then stood with his sister-in-law: "Mon. February 18th. I carried Sally out of the confusion to M. Colvil's.—Sun. Feb. 24th. After sacrament, Mr. Blackwell fell

upon me in a manner peculiar to himself, dragging me to my dear sister.—Wed. Feb. 27th. My brother came to the chapel-house with his wife. I was glad to see him; saluted her; stayed to hear him preach.—Friday March 15th. I called on my sister; kissed and assured her I was perfectly reconciled to her, and to my brother.—Mon. March 18th. I finished Marcus Antoninus, having learnt from him, I hope, some useful lessons, particularly not to resent, not to revenge myself, not to let my peace lie at the mercy of every injurious person.—Tues. March 19th. I brought my wife and sister together, and took all opportunities of showing the latter my sincere respect and love" (II, 78-79). On May 8 he set out with Sally for Bristol. "Sun. May 12th. I met my sister at the Horsefair, and behaved to her *as such*—Tues. May 14. I showed her, both at my own house, and the houses of my friends, all the civility in my power" (80-81).

No clue to his grievance has been preserved in his printed writings. Tyerman, on the authority of a manuscript, informs us that Mrs. John Wesley "accused Charles of idleness, and declared that, for years, his dearest Sally had been John's mistress. Charles danced with rage at this imputation, but Sally calmly smiled, and said, 'Who will believe my sister now?'" (Tyerman, *J. W.*, II, 110).

Years went by without much mending matters. Again, in April, 1755, Charles, writing to his wife, wonders, "What shall you and I do to love her

better? 'Love your enemies' is with man impossible: but is anything too hard for God? I fear you do not *constantly* pray for her. I *must* pray, or sink into the spirit of revenge" (II, 201). "I met my good angel and sister," he relates ten days later. "I have done her honour before the people, and behaved (though I say it) very much like a gentleman; only that I took a French leave this morning, that is, left Leeds without telling either her or her husband" (II, 202). Next September, with a touch of humour [why should Mr. Fitchett (*Wesley and His Century*, p. 409) describe it as *unconscious*?]: "I called, two minutes before preaching, on Mrs. W. at the Foundery; and in all that time had not one quarrel" (II, 213). In September, 1757, she is at Bristol. "I hope Mrs. W. keeps her distance. If malice is stronger in her than pride she will pay you a mischievous visit. Poor Mr. Lefevre breakfasted with me this morning, and lamented that he cannot love her. Blessed be God, I can, and desire to love her more. What is her debt of one hundred pence to ours of one hundred thousand talents?" (II, 217). In July, 1759, he thinks it necessary to give this warning: "You may safely direct to me at the Foundery, only not omitting Charles, nor mentioning my best friend"; for she had a sad trick of mistaking other people's letters for her own (II, 219). "Yesterday morning," he reports a fortnight after, "I traced Mrs. G.'s intelligence, through Miss Bradshaw and Mrs. Allen, to the fountain-head, *my best friend*"

(II, 260): hardly anything pleasant, to be sure. "My best friend" he used to style her, because she told him of his faults more faithfully than any one else.

By 1766 there seems to have come some surface improvement. "My brother and sister set off for Brentford," he writes. "They will call on you, I presume, next Wednesday. She continues quite placid and tame. You can be courteous without trusting her" (II, 247, 263). She had just been seriously ill.

II

JOHN AND CHARLES

EVEN had nothing awkward ever before occurred between them, such feminine bickerings could not but alter the brothers' intimacy for the worse. It is noteworthy that Charles, who had attended all the Conferences from the first, remained in London while John was meeting the preachers at Bristol on March 11-15, 1751 (John, II, 224; Charles, II, 79). John had anticipated it with some degree of melancholy: "The note delivered to me on Sunday night, which ran in these words: 'I am not determined when I shall leave London,' convinces me that I must not expect to see the writer of it at our approaching Conference. This is indeed deserting me at my utmost need, just when the Philistines are upon me. But I am content; for I am well assured the Lord is not departed from me. Is it not best to let all these things sleep? to let him do just what he will do? and to say nothing myself, good or bad, concerning it, till his mind is more cool and able to bear it?" (To Mr. Blackwell, March 5, 1751; xii, 174.)

Who the Philistines were, is to be guessed from the following extracts of John's journal: "Saturday March 9.—Many of our Preachers came from

various parts. My spirit was much bowed down among them, fearing some of them were perverted from the simplicity of the Gospel. But it was revived at the sight of John H[oughton], John N[elson], and those who came with them in the evening; knowing they held the truth as it is in Jesus, and did not hold it in unrighteousness. Friday 15.—I mentioned whatever I thought was amiss, or wanting, in any of our brethren. It was received in a right spirit, with much love, and serious, earnest attention" (John, II, 223, 224).

A more pestilent outbreak of Philistinism soon called upon the brothers once more to act in close union: about the middle of June, Charles Wesley had been urged to bring one of the Preachers, James Wheatley, "to answer for some horrible practices of his." John hurried down from London. "I carried my brother home; offered to join with him heartily and entirely," Charles writes on June 19 (II, 82, 83). On July 3, John was praising his brother's behaviour: "His mind seemed altogether changed before he went. He was quite free and open to us, and pressed us much to make use of his house in his absence, just as if it were our own. There is a fair prospect on every side" (xii, 176).

The end of June they spent together in examining Wheatley, who pleaded guilty, yet justified himself, and threatened to expose *all* the Preachers, who, he said, were like himself. When face to face with ten of them, he could

not charge them with any sin (C. II, 84). Nevertheless, Roger Ball, invited to preach to the Irish congregations, had recently been likewise detected: one of his abominable errors being, that a believer had a right to all women. "I marvel," John Wesley remarks, "he has turned only three persons out of the way" (J., II, 181). While enquiring into Wheatley's case, Charles had advised some others, one John Hewish for instance, to leave off preaching (C., II, 82). It was his growing conviction that they had not been particular enough in admitting helpers. On different grounds, John had but lately complained to Edward and Charles Perronet he had scarce any one on whom he could depend, when a hundred miles off; not one in Ireland, not six in England, whose wills were broken to serve him as true sons in the Gospel (Tyerman, II, 84-85). "It put my brother and me upon a resolution of strictly examining into the life and moral behaviour of every Preacher in connexion with us; and the office fell upon me" (Charles, June 28, II, 84).

The very next day he started on his visitation tour, through Worcester, Birmingham, Leeds, and Newcastle, designing to proceed slowly towards Scotland (C., 84-95; J., xii. 176). Disorderly walkers he scarcely found; but, in John's phrase, triflers and busybodies. Of Michael Fenwick, at Leeds, on August 5, he writes: "Such a Preacher have I never heard, and hope I never shall again.

It was beyond description. I cannot say he preached false doctrine, or true, or any doctrine at all, but pure, unmixed nonsense. Not one sentence did he utter that could do the least good to any one soul. Now and then a text of Scripture, or a verse quotation, was dragged in by head and shoulders. I could scarce refrain from stopping him. . . . I talked closely with him, utterly averse to working, and told him plainly he should either labour with his hands, or preach no more. He hardly complied, though he confessed it was his ruin, he having been taken off his business. I answered I would repair the supposed injury, by setting him up again in his shop. Thomas Colbeck brought Eleazer Webster to me. I spoke in vain to a self-hardened slave of sin, and silenced him" (Charles, II, 90-91). At Newcastle, on August 16, "I heard J. J., the drummer, again, and liked him worse than at first. He might perhaps have done good among the soldiers, but to leave his calling and set up for an Itinerant, was, in my judgment, a step contrary to the design of God, as well as to his own and the church's interest" (*ib.* 94). Conversely, on August 23, "I spake with our brother Allen, an Exhorter, whom one would fain have persuaded to forsake his business. I persuaded him to continue in it" (*ib.* 95).

The perhaps over-earnest faithfulness with which he acquitted himself of his task could hardly commend him to the love of the lay-

preachers. John, who used to display more diplomacy and gentleness toward them, advised him "not to check the young ones without strong necessity. If we lay some aside, we must have a supply ; and of the two, I prefer grace before gifts." Again, a fortnight later : "We must have forty Itinerant Preachers, or drop some of our Societies. You cannot so well judge of this, without seeing the letters I receive from all parts" (July 24, August 8, Whitehead, 1793, II, 267).

Yet he also was treading along the same path : "I spoke to one this morning, so that I was even amazed at myself (*ib.*). "I now found more and more proofs that the poor wretch whom we had lately disowned, was continually labouring to poison our other Preachers. And with some of them he did not lose his labour ; the deep prejudices they then received having utterly drank up their blood and spirits ; so that we were obliged, sooner or later, to part with them also" (J., August 21, II, 240). "O that you and I may arise and stand upright ! I quite agree with you : let us have but six, so we are all one. I have sent one more home to his work. We may trust God to send forth more labourers ; only be not unwilling to receive them, when there is reasonable proof that he has sent them" (August 24, Wh., 268). Writing to a friend on August 21, he was still more explicit : "I see plainly the spirit of *Ham*, if not of *Corah*, has fully possessed several of our Preachers. So much the more freely and firmly do I acquiesce in the

determination of my brother, "That it is far better for us to have ten, or six Preachers who are alive to God, sound in the faith, and of one heart with us and with one another, than fifty of whom we have no such assurance" (*ib.*, 268). On August 17 he relates to Charles: "C. S[kelton] pleads for a kind of *Aristocracy*, and says you and I should do nothing without the consent of all the Preachers; otherwise we govern arbitrarily, to which they cannot submit. Whence is this?" (*ib.*, p. 268.) As early as July 17, he had owned: "I fear for C. S. and J. C[ownley] more and more. I have heard they frequently and bitterly rail against the church." Upon which Charles queried: "What assurance can we have that they will not forsake it, at least when we are dead? Ought we to admit any man for a Preacher, till we can trust his invariable attachment to the Church?" (*ib.*, p. 266.)

On this point, indeed, hung the destinies of Methodism as an independent religious society. So far, it had only been intended to supplement the services of the Established Church, to carry them among the labouring masses, in town or country, that had no easy access to them, to provide them with those opportunities for corporate spiritual life and mutual edification which workmen's clubs afforded for their temporal interests. Long enough had the voluntary helpers been disowned, denounced, reviled, and persecuted by Church and State authorities; long enough

had they drudged in almost menial unrewarded obscurity. If good enough for the ministry of the Word, why not for the uncurtailed sacerdotal dignity and privileges? Why not stand by themselves apart from that Church that had scornfully spurned them away? This was the dominant feeling of many, this the goal of their, after all, natural ambition, this the stake of the struggle that was to fill up the latter half of Wesley's life, their point being carried only after his death.

While "the work of God" chiefly meant for John what had been achieved and organized under his leadership, Charles could only conceive of it as in organic connection with the Church of England, and bound to wither away as soon as separated from it. Yet John himself had no wish to leave the Church, unless conscientiously compelled to do so, forcibly brought to this dilemma: "to dissent, or to be silent" (to Charles, June 23, 1755; Jackson, II, 86). For the present he was at one with his brother. In November they met and talked the matter over at Perronet's, and agreed to act in concert. Six weeks later they signed an agreement, regulating the appointment of preachers, clauses 3, 4, and 5 of which stipulated that none should be received as an itinerant by either of them alone, but by both conjointly giving him a note under both their hands; that neither would, without the consent of the other, readmit a travelling preacher laid aside; that, should they ever disagree in their judgment, they would refer the

matter to Mr. Perronet (Tyerman, II, 129-130). On March 16, 1752, they and four of their chief assistants further pledged themselves to abide in the closest union with each other, and never to leave the communion of the Church of England without the consent of all whose names were sub-joined (Tyerman, II, 138).

This suffices to show how critical a point had been reached in the development of the United Societies; how capital it just then was for the two brothers, whose respective views and qualities exactly made up for the deficiencies of the other, to stand shoulder to shoulder. This was not long to be the case.

Article 6 of the 1751 Agreement read thus: "We will entirely be patterns of all we expect from every preacher; particularly of zeal, diligence, and punctuality in the work; by constantly preaching and meeting the society; by visiting yearly Ireland, Cornwall, and the north; and, in general, by superintending the whole work, and every branch of it, with all the strength that God shall give us."

Does this refer to the charge of idleness brought against Charles Wesley by his sister-in-law, perhaps a mere echo of her husband? Whether fettered by ill-health (in September, 1750, he had set out for the north, and returned the next day much out of order [John II, 208]; and in 1751, during his summer visitation, he was several times laid up with violent fits of fever [Charles, II,

89-90, 91, 94]), or held down by increasing family ties (travelling just after her marriage had not agreed with his wife; on February, 3, 1750, she miscarried; their first child was born in August, 1752), Charles, except for an occasional trip or two to Cornwall or to the north, shared his many remaining days between Bristol and London: a very limited routine, as compared with the untiring ubiquity of his elder brother.

There is much ground to support Whitehead's way of accounting for Charles's attitude. "It appears to me that, after the first difference with his brother, who disappointed his intended marriage, [John] made up his mind not to suffer either a superior or an equal in these respects. From that time he seemed determined to be, *aut Cæsar, aut nihil*." Perceiving which determination, finding the Preachers became more and more prejudiced against him, Charles thought it most prudent to withdraw from the active situation he had hitherto held among them (1793, II, 270). At the same time his close friendship with Lady Huntingdon and Whitefield seems to have stirred up suspicion and jealousy (Tyerman, II, 288-289, December 22, 1752).

"Some of our Preachers here," John writes from Athlone on August 8, 1752, "have peremptorily affirmed that you are not so strict as me; that you neither practise nor enforce, nor approve of, the rules of the Bands. I suppose they mean those which condemn needless self-indulgence, and re-

commend the means of grace, fasting in particular, which is well-nigh forgotten throughout this nation. I think it would be of use if you wrote without delay, and explained yourself at large.— They have likewise openly affirmed that you agree with Mr. Whitefield, touching perseverance at least, if not predestination too. Is it not highly expedient that you should write explicitly and strongly on this head likewise?" (*Works*, XII, 114.) "Does every one forget me, as soon as we have the sea between us?" querulously runs another sentence. "I wish you could persuade our friend to share the labour with me. One of us should in anywise visit both the North and Ireland every year," he bemoans to Mr. Blackwell about the same time (xii, 180).

Another twelvemonth, and the pitch rose still higher. "I came back from Bedford last night. I know not whether it was your will or no (I believe not); but I am sure it was God's will for you to call there. . . . I give you a dilemma. Take one side or the other. Either act really in connexion with me, or never pretend to it. Rather disclaim it; and openly avow you do and will not. By acting in connexion with me, I mean, take counsel with me once or twice a year, as to the places where you will labour. Hear my advice before you fix; whether you take it or no. At present you are so far from this, that I do not even know when and where you intend to go. So far are you from following any advice of mine,

nay, even from asking it. And yet I may say, without vanity, that I am a better judge of this matter than either Lady Huntingdon, Sally Jones, or any other: nay, than your own heart; that is, will.—I wish you all peace, zeal, and love” (October 20, 1753, xii, 115). Again: “You say, ‘that is not the will of God, which his providence makes impracticable. But his providence made my going to Bedford impracticable.’ Prove the minor; and I shall be content.—In journeying, which of us lays his plan according to reason? Either you move (quite contrary to me) by those impressions which you account divine; or, which is worse, *sit pro ratione voluntas*.—You told William Briggs, that you never declined going to any place because my wife was there. I am glad of it. If so, I have hope we may sometime spend a little time together.—Why do you omit giving the sacrament in Kingswood? What is reading prayers at Bristol, in comparison with this? I am sure, in making this vehement alteration, you never consulted with me.” And this, endorsed by Charles “Brother, Oct. 31, 1753. Trying to bring me under his yoke”: “What I have desired any time these ten years, is, either that you would really act in connexion, or that you would never say you do, either leave off professing, or begin performing. . . . O brother, *pretend* no longer to the thing that is not; you do not, will not, act in concert with me. Not since I was married only (the putting it on that is a mere Finesse) but for

ten years last past and upwards¹ you have no more acted in connexion with me than Mr. Whitefield has done. I would to God you would begin to do it now; or else talk no more as *if you did*. My love to my sister. Adieu" (*Works*, XII, 116; and Wesley Historical Society, VI, 94-95).

Surely more than the usual Wesleyan curtness. For the acerbity of tone that pervades these letters, is it fanciful to assume that the rankling sores of previous conflicts are quite as much responsible as the blood-souring influence of disease?

"My fever intermitted after twelve hours. After a second fit of about fourteen hours, I began taking the bark, and am now recovering my strength," he records on October 31 (xii, 116). During his southwestern round, in July and August, he had been taken with bleeding at the nose, the flux, vomitings, headache, and cramps (II, 298-299). On coming back to London in October, he again found himself out of order, but believed it would go off. The next day being Sunday, though considerably worse, he could not think of sparing himself. On Monday he rose extremely sick, yet determined to keep his word, and set out for Canterbury, where he arrived with much trouble, and was seized with the cold fit of an ague. On Saturday, 27, he managed to come back to London. On Thursday, November 8,

¹ As early as 1745 John had indeed asked the Conference: "Should not my brother follow me step by step? . . ." But his self-assertive yoke did not then chafe cankered wounds (Bennet's Minutes, 1745, p. 27).

his disorder returned more violent than it had been since he left Cornwall: nor had he any time to spare to take drugs. A settled pain in the left breast, a violent cough, and a slow fever followed upon riding in a high wind and piercing cold on Wednesday, 14. However, he preached at Spital-fields on Sunday, 18. He would have stayed at home on Sunday, 25, had not a charity sermon been advertised in the public papers. On Monday the doctor peremptorily prescribed the country air, rest, asses' milk, and riding daily. John retired to Mr. Blackwell's, at Lewisham, and, to prevent vile panegyric, ordered this inscription to be placed on his tombstone: "Here lieth the body of John Wesley, a brand plucked out of the burning: who died of a consumption in the fifty-first year of his age, not leaving, after his debts are paid, ten pounds behind him: praying, God be merciful to me, an unprofitable servant!" (II, 308-9).

Charles, who had concluded, from letters last received, that he was out of all danger, heard through a friend, on November 29, he must make haste if he would see his brother alive, and reached the Foundery on December 1. The next morning he rode to Lewisham, found him far gone in a galloping consumption, fell on his neck, and wept; following him to his chamber, "he made it his request to his wife and me, to forget all that is past, which I very readily agreed to, and once more offered her my service in great sincerity. Neither will I suspect hers, but hope she will *do*

as she says." Yet it was hard that his absence should have been blamed, while not a word of notice had been sent him (II, 95-97). On December 3 Dr. Fothergill, on whom he waited with his sister-in-law, advised hastening to the Hotwells at Bristol.

Meanwhile many, despairing of John's recovery, hailed Charles as his eventual successor. "I told the Society on Sunday night that I neither could nor would stand in my brother's place (if God took him to himself), for I had neither a body, nor a mind, nor talents, nor grace for it."—"On Tuesday morning I got the long-wished-for opportunity of talking fully to him of all which has passed since his marriage, and the result of our conference was perfect harmony" (II, 99).

The sad news of his wife being taken ill of the small-pox recalled him to Bristol. When she was safe, after another stay in London, he joined his brother at the Hotwell, where they "spent several days together in comparing the translation of the Evangelists with the original, and reading Dr. Heylyn's *Lectures* and Dr. Doddridge's *Family Expositor*." Indefatigable John was working at his *Notes on the New Testament*, which they transcribed in July at their friend Captain Galatin's, besides preaching at Norwich, only a mile and a half from Lakenham (John, II, 311, 313-314; Charles, II, 100-102).

In April, 1755, having met at Birstal, they read *A Gentleman's Reasons for his Dissent from the*

Church of England, an elaborate and lively tract, containing the strength of the cause, says John; "but it did not yield us one proof that it is lawful for us (much less our duty) to separate from it." On May 6 the Conference began at Leeds, seriously and calmly considered whatever was advanced for or against separating, and fully agreed that, whether *lawful* or not, it was no ways expedient (John II, 328-329). "So, the wound is healed—slightly," Charles wrote to his wife (II, 202). In August, 1756, he and John likewise closed the Bristol Conference by a solemn declaration of their purpose never to separate from the Church; and all their brethren concurred therein (John, II, 385). On the same errand, about the middle of September, he set out for the Midlands and the north: the last time he went on a circuit.

Fraternal friendliness had apparently been somewhat restored. "I never liked him better, and was never more united to him, since his unhappy marriage," Charles declares after hearing John preach at Lady Huntingdon's (February 27, 1759, II, 219). Still the good angel and sister stood between them, expert at sowing dissension. The more and more resolute stand Charles was taking against the gradual invasion of the sacerdotal office was turning the Preachers' minds and affections from him, and driving him farther and farther into the margin or background of the movement. Ineffective protests only signaled his reappearances on the scene. Hardly did the

new recruits of itinerancy treat him with proper respect. Meantime John was step by step giving way to his assistant's wishes, and foreseeing the end: "I am at my wit's end with regard to two things—the Church and Christian perfection. Unless both you and I stand in the gap in good earnest, the Methodists will drop them both. Talking will not avail. We must *do*, or be borne away. Will you set shoulder to shoulder? If so, think deeply upon the matter, and tell me what can be done" (May 14, 1768, xii, 135). Again, in December, 1772: "Why, you will not set shoulder to shoulder, or you could say something about the Church. But two are better than one. If we live till August, stand by me, and we will put the matter home" (*ib.* 141). And in August, 1785, after the penultimate concession, when, using what he had long thought to be his rights as a scriptural bishop, he had consecrated "superintendents" and ordained "elders" for the now bishopless church of independent America: "If you will go hand in hand with me, do. But do not hinder me, if you will not help. Perhaps if you had kept close to me, I might have done better. However, with or without help, I creep on" (xiii, 254).

In the last sentence but one, there was, whether ironically meant or not, a good deal of truth. Had Charles's characteristic tendencies remained a determining factor of Methodism, it might conceivably have evolved on very different lines,

less wide-spreading perhaps, yet more true to its original purpose and to the life-long desire of even its more daring founder, which was not to build up a new church, but to vivify and strengthen the old one. Nor would Charles's counsel have thus lost weight, but for the estrangement, merely temporary though it was, due to his interfering between his brother and Grace Murray, and to Mrs. Vazeille's interfering between him and his brother. Indeed, John could the less forget and forgive his disappointed love, as the match he had been driven to thereby was proving more unfortunate.

III

JOHN AND HIS WIFE

WHETHER John Wesley ever was as passionately fond of widow Vazeille as he had been of widow Murray is very much open to doubt. Not once does his printed journal mention her by name, or even allude to her before their marriage: on this subject he always kept extremely reticent.

Of course, all his general arguments in favour of a married life retained their conclusive force after he had reluctantly parted from his beloved. Still was wedding better than burning; just as necessary now continually to defend him against unholy desires and inordinate affections; just as helpful in order "to remove hindrances from other women." The only difference being that the person selected was not perhaps quite so proper as the former one, nor so richly endowed with grace, gifts, fruits, and qualifications of all sorts.

Nay, it is not inconceivable that the bridegroom had never entertained any very particular feeling for the bride. Remember Whitefield's courtship, and, after explaining that he wanted a mistress for his orphanage, his telling the parents of his intended wife: "You need not be afraid to send me a refusal, for I bless God, if I know anything of

my own heart, I am free from that foolish passion the world calls love" (Tyerman, *Whitefield*, I, 368-369). John Wesley could not have been so rude. Yet his dominant thought and chief inducement to matrimony very likely was, as saintly Fletcher later put it in his Portrait of St. Paul, "how much it concerns a minister neither to tempt others, nor to be tempted himself" (Tyerman, *Fletcher*, 485-486).

Whatever the case may be, there is much of tender care in his early married letters. "I persuade myself neither Mrs. Blackwell, nor Mr. Lloyd, or you, will be wanting in your good offices. And will you not likewise advise and comfort her who is now likely to stand in need of every help?" he writes on March 5, 1751, to his friend Ebenezer Blackwell, a Lombard Street banker. A business letter to the same, on April 7, similarly concludes: "I am persuaded Mrs. Blackwell and you do not forget me, nor her that is as my own soul" (xii, 174, 175). And here is a pretty sample of honeymoon correspondence:—

"Tetsworth, 42 miles from London,

" *March 28, 1751.*

"My dear Molly,

"Do I write too soon? Have not you above all the People in the world a Right to hear from me as soon as possibly I can? You have surely a Right to every Proof of Love I can give, and to all the little Help which is in my power. For you have given me even your own Self. O how can

we praise God enough, for making us Helps meet for each other! I am utterly astonished at His Goodness. Let not only our Lips but our Lives shew forth His Praise! . . .

"If any Letter comes to you, directed to y^e Rev^d Mr. John Wesley, open it: It is for yourself. Dear Love, Adieu!"¹

This last a token of trust he was to repent of before long. In June, sorrowful clouds were already veiling the honeymoon. "I found my sister in tears," Charles Wesley reports; "professed my love, pity, and desire to help her. I heard her complaints of my brother, carried her to my house, where, after supper, she resumed the subject, and went away comforted. Sat. June 22.—I passed another hour with her, in free, affectionate conference; then with my brother; and then with both together. Our explanation ended in prayer and perfect peace" (C., II, 82).

What were the complaints about? "Can you, when you have a husband, be as though you had none, and willingly part with him, even for a long season?" George Whitefield plainly asked the young lady he was wooing in 1740 (Tyerman, *Whitefield*, I, 368). John Wesley acted precisely on the same principle: "I cannot understand, how a Methodist Preacher can answer it to God, to preach one sermon, or travel one day less, in a married, than in a single state. In this respect,

¹ *Wesley Studies*, p. 102.

surely, 'it remaineth, that they who have wives be as though they had none'"¹ (II, 224). Therefore, as soon as "tolerably able to ride, though not to walk," he had set out for Bristol on March 4. But for his sprained ankle, he would have left on the very day of the wedding, Monday, February 18 (II, 223). Mrs. John Wesley, in her Threadneedle Street home, must have felt quite as much of a widow as Mrs. Vazeille ever was.

Wesley was well aware of it. Discussing with Mr. Blackwell how to settle some money affairs of hers ("a friend or two of my wife should meet Mr. Blisson and a friend or two of his, in order to persuade him, if it can be done, to come to an account as to what remains in his hands"), he adds, on May 14: "I am much obliged both to Mrs. Blackwell and you, on my own, and on my wife's account. She has many trials; but not one more than God knows, and knows to be profitable to her. I believe you have been, and will be, a means of removing some. If these outward encumbrances were removed, it might be a means of her spending more time with me; which would probably be useful as well as agreeable to her" (xii, 174, 175).

Accordingly, on Monday, August 19, he set out with her for Cornwall, whence they rode back to London on October 21. On March 15, 1752, he again took horse with her and her daughter; went

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 29.

to Birmingham, Manchester, Birstal, Leeds, Epworth, Grimsby, Hull, York, Durham, Newcastle, Penrith, Cockermouth, and Whitehaven ; set sail for Dublin on July 13, and wandered through Ireland till October 11 (John, II, 240, 245, 251, 270, 276). "After taking a round of between three and four hundred miles, we came hither yesterday in the afternoon," he complacently informs Blackwell, from Epworth, on April 16. "My wife is at least as well as when she left London : The more she travels, the better she bears it. It gives us yet another proof, that whatever God calls us to, he will fit us for ; so that we have no need to take thought for the morrow" (xii, 176).

Conjugal itinerating apparently was not sufficient to mend matters. "I am truly concerned that matters are in so melancholy a situation. I think the unhappy lady is most to be pitied, though the gentleman's case is mournful enough. Their sufferings proceed from widely different causes. His are the visible chastisements of a loving Father ; hers, the immediate effect of an angry, bitter spirit ; and, indeed, it is a sad consideration, that, after so many months have elapsed, the same warmth and bitterness should remain." So does benign Vincent Perronet condole with Charles Wesley on November 3, 1752 (Tyerman, II, 108).

As there is no evidence of Mrs. Wesley having accompanied her husband on any other Irish tour, this may have witnessed the scene John Hampson,

the preacher, thus related to his son : " Jack, I was once on the point of committing murder. Once, when I was in the North of Ireland, I went into a room, and found Mrs. Wesley foaming with fury. Her husband was on the floor, where she had been trailing him by the hair of his head ; and she herself was still holding in her hand venerable locks which she had plucked up by the roots. I felt as though I could have knocked the soul out of her " (Tyerman, II, 110-111).

However, after John's illness, they resumed itinerancy, going to Leeds in April, in May to Newcastle. But in September John went alone to Cornwall. Fresh trouble ensued. " Charles Perronet being out of town last Saturday, my packet, directed to him, fell into other hands. This has raised a violent storm ; for it contained a few lines which I writ to Mrs. Lefevre, in answer to a letter she sent me the week before concerning Mr. Furly.¹ It is pity ! I should be glad if I had to do with reasonable people. But this likewise is for good " (to Mr. Blackwell, xii, 183-184).

Mrs. John Wesley was fearfully jealous. A few months later the object of her rage was Sarah Ryan, then slightly over thirty years old : the cork-cutter she had first married was already another's husband ; the Irish sailor Ryan, whom she married next, being gone to sea, she soon

¹ Perhaps it ought to be Miss Furly, a Bristol Methodist, to whom John frequently wrote (xii, 196-210). She married John Downes about 1763 (xii, 207).

after married an Italian to whom she had been previously engaged. He went to sea; Ryan returned; then again left her. She went into domestic service; was taken ill; was sent away from the Hospital in deep distress; and made the acquaintance of some London Methodists about 1754. With her Wesley kept a close spiritual correspondence (xii, 216-222). "If she abides in her integrity, she is a jewel indeed: One whose equal I have not yet found in England," he writes to Miss Furlly in April, 1758 (xii, 202-203), barely ten years after lavishing the same sort of praise on Grace Murray. "I can hardly avoid trembling for you still: Upon what a pinnacle do you stand! Perhaps few persons in England have been in so dangerous a situation as you are now. I know not whether any other was ever so regarded both by my brother and me at the same time. What can I do to help you? The Father of Mercies help you, and with his favourable kindness surround you on every side! May the eternal Spirit help you in every thought, word, and work, to serve the living God!" he tells her on December 14, 1757 (xii, 219).

Oddly enough, a few weeks before, he had appointed her Bristol and Kingswood housekeeper, acquainting her on November 8 with the rules of the family (*ib.*, 216). In this capacity, she would sit at the head of the dining-table with often a large number of preachers around it. "The —— now serving you has three husbands living," once

shrieked Mrs. Wesley on such an occasion. To this painful outburst Wesley probably refers on January 20, 1758: "My dear Sister,—How did you feel yourself under your late trial? Did you find no stirring of resentment? no remains of your own will? no desire or wish that things should be otherwise? . . . I never saw you so much moved as you appeared to be that evening. Your soul was then greatly troubled; and a variety of conflicting passions, love, sorrow, desire, with a kind of despair, were easy to be read in your countenance. And was not your heart unhinged at all? Was it not ruffled or discomposed? Was your soul all the time calmly stayed on God? waiting upon him without distraction? Perhaps one end of this close trial was, to give you a deeper knowledge of yourself and of God; of His power to save, and of the salvation he hath wrought in you. Most of the trials you have lately met with, have been of another kind; but it is expedient for you to go through both evil and good report. The conversing with you, either by speaking or writing, is an unspeakable blessing to me. I cannot think of you without thinking of God. Others often lead me to him; but it is, as it were, going round about; you bring me straight into His presence. Therefore, whoever warns me against trusting you, I cannot refrain; as I am clearly convinced He calls me to it. I am Your affectionate brother" (xii, 220).

Strangely exalted strains these, however laud-

able their consolatory purpose may have been. Now came the crisis, as related on January 27 :—

“My dear Sister,—Last Friday, after many severe words, my [wife] left me, vowing she would see me no more. As I had wrote to you the same morning, I began to reason with myself, till I almost doubted whether I had done well in writing, or whether I ought to write to you at all. After prayer that doubt was taken away. Yet I was almost sorry that I had written that morning. In the evening, while I was preaching at the chapel, she came into the chamber where I had left my clothes, searched my pockets, and found the letter there, which I had finished, but had not sealed. While she read it, God broke her heart ; and I afterwards found her in such a temper as I have not seen her in for several years. She has continued in the same ever since. So I think God has given a sufficient answer, with regard to our writing to each other.

“I still feel some fear concerning you. How have you found yourself since we parted? Have you suffered no loss by anything? Has nothing damped the vigour of your spirit? Is honour a blessing and dishonour too? the frowns and smiles of men? . . . I want you to live like an angel here below, or rather, like the Son of God. Woman, walk thou as Christ walked ; then you cannot but love and pray for Your affectionate brother” (xii, 220–221).

To the same he writes on February 10 ; “Your

last letter was seasonable indeed ; I was growing faint in my mind. The being continually watched over for evil, the having every word I spoke, every action I did, small or great, watched over with no friendly eye ; the hearing a thousand little, tart, unkind reflections, in return for the kindest words I could devise,

Like drops of eating water on the marble,
At length have worn my sinking spirits down.

Yet I could not say, ' Take thy plague away from me,' but only, ' Let me be purified, not consumed ' (xii, 221).

If Mrs. Wesley, as a matter of fact, was even then staying away from her husband, these disclosures do not betoken very keen regrets. Of such fleeting desertions he had had perhaps some experience before, though with more of anxiety on his own side : " I think it is fourteen or fifteen days since my wife wrote to me. I am afraid she is not well," he was apprising Ebenezer Blackwell in May, 1757 (xii, 185). What is sure, is that, by July, 1759, she had come back to the Foundery, where she was stirring fresh mischief ; and Charles recommended to his wife, when writing to him, not to omit his Christian name, nor mention his best friend (C. W., II, 219, 260). She may even have been there at the end of 1758, as John, in a letter to her from Norwich, on December 23, says : " Dear Molly,—I was much concerned the night before I left London [Nov. 29] at your unkind

and unjust accusations. You accused me of Unkindness, Cruelty, and what not? And why so? Because I insist upon chusing my own company! Because I insist upon conversing, by speaking or Writing, with those whom I (not you) judge proper. For more than seven years this has been a Bone of Contention betwⁿ you and me, as it is so still: For I will not, I cannot, I dare not give it up. But then you 'will rage, and fret, and call me names.' I am sorry for it: But I cannot help it. I still do, and must insist, That I have a Right to chuse my own company. Then you will 'denounce against me all the curses from Genesis to the Revelation.' You may so: but you gain no ground hereby: For still I cannot give up my Right. Nay, but you 'will say all manner of Evil of me.' Be it so: But still I stand just where I was. Then you 'will show all my private letters to all the world.' If you do, I must assert my Right still. All this will not extort it from me: nor anything else which you can do. You may, therefore, as well allow it now as after we have squabbled about it (if we live so long) seven years longer. For it is my Right by all the Laws of God and Man, and by a Right which I never can part with. O do not continue to trouble yourself and me, and to disturb the Children of God by still grasping at a Power which must be denied you, by Him who is nevertheless Your truly affectionate husband" (*Wesley Studies*, 103).

A longer explanation, which sheds an instructive

light on their differences, was sent her from Coleford, on October 23, 1759:—

“Dear Molly,—I will tell you simply and plainly the things which I dislike. If you remove them, well. If not, I am but where I was. I dislike your showing any one of my letters and private papers without my leave. This never did any good yet, either to you, or me, or any one. It only sharpens and embitters your own spirit. And the same effect it naturally has upon others. The same it would have upon me but that (by the grace of God) I do not think of it. It can do no good. It can never bring me nearer, though it may drive me further off. And should you do as you often threaten me, then the matter is over. I know what I have to do. In all this you are fighting against yourself. You are frustrating your own purpose, if you want me to love you. You take just the wrong way. No one ever was *forced* to love another. It cannot be: love can only be won by *softness*; foul means avail nothing. But you say, ‘I have tried fair means, and they did not succeed.’ If they do not, none will. Then you have only to say, ‘This evil is of the Lord; I am clay in His hand.’

“I dislike (2) not having the command of my own house, not being at liberty to invite even my nearest relations so much as to drink a dish of tea without disobliging *you*. I dislike (3) the being myself a prisoner in my own house, the having my chamber door watched continually, so

that no person can go in or out but such as have your good leave. I dislike (4) the being but a prisoner at large even when I go abroad, inasmuch as you are highly disgusted if I do not give you an account of every place I go to and every person with whom I converse. I dislike (5) the not being safe in my own house. My house is *not* my castle. I cannot call even my study, even my bureau, my own. They are liable to be plundered every day. You say, 'I plunder you of nothing but papers.' I am not sure of that. How is it possible I should? I miss money too, and he that will steal a pin will steal a pound. But were it so, a scholar's papers are his treasure, my journal in particular. 'But I took only such papers as relate to Sarah Ryan and Sarah Crosby.' That is not true. What are Mr. Landey's letters to them? Besides, you have taken parts of my journal which relate to neither one nor the other. I dislike (6) your treatment of my servants (though, indeed, they are not properly mine). You do all that in you lies to make their lives a burden to them. You browbeat, harass, rate them like dogs, make them afraid to speak to me. You treat them with such haughtiness, sternness, sourness, surliness, ill-nature, as never were known in any house of mine, for near a dozen years. You forget even good breeding, and use such coarse language as befits none but a fishwife.

"I dislike (7) your talking against me behind my back, and that every day and almost every

hour of the day ; making my faults (real or supposed) the standing topic of your conversation. I dislike (8) your slandering me, laying to my charge things which you know are false. Such are (to go but a few days back) that I beat you, which you told James Burges ; that I rode in Kingswood with Sarah Ryan, which you told Sarah Rigby ; and that I required you, when we were first married, never to sit in my presence without my leave, which you told Mrs. Lee, Mrs. Fry, and several others, and stood to it before my face. I dislike (9) your common custom of saying things not true. To instance only in two or three particulars. You told Mr. Ireland, 'Mr. Vazzilla learnt Spanish in a fortnight.' You told Mr. Fry, 'Mrs. Ellison was the author as to my intrigue in Georgia.' You told Mrs. Ellison, 'You never said any such thing ; you never charged her with it.' You also told her, 'that I had laid a plot to serve you as Susannah was served by the two elders.' I dislike (10) your extreme immeasurable bitterness to all who endeavour to defend my character (as my brother, Joseph Jones, Clayton Carthy), breaking out even into foul, unmannerly language, such as ought not to defile a gentlewoman's lips, if she did not believe one word of the Bible.

"And now, Molly, what would any one advise you to that has a real concern for your happiness ? Certainly (1) to show, read, touch those letters no more, if you did not restore them to their proper owner ; (2) to allow *me* the command of my own

house, with free leave to invite thither whom I please ; (3) to allow me my liberty there, that any one who will may come to me, without let or hindrance ; (4) to let me go where I please, and to whom I please, without giving an account to any ; (5) to assure me, you will take no more of my papers, nor anything of mine, without my consent ; (6) to treat all the servants where you are (whether you like them or no) with courtesy and humanity, and to speak (if you speak at all) to them, as well as others, with good-nature and good manners ; (7) to speak no evil of me behind my back ; (8) never to accuse me falsely ; (9) to be extremely cautious of saying anything that is not strictly true, both as to the matter and manner ; and (10) to avoid all bitterness of expression till you can avoid all bitterness of spirit.

“These are the advices which I now give you in the fear of God, and in tender love to your soul. Nor can I give you a stronger proof that I am your affectionate husband ” (Telford, *Life of Wesley*, 257-259).

Did Mrs. John Wesley ever act upon these advices, which their being drawn up in such precise self-controlled array must have made the more galling to her temper? Anyhow, in June, 1760, we find John enquiring from Charles about her : “Where and how is my wife? I wrote to her on Saturday last” (xii, 119). He was then once more travelling in Ireland. It is not clear, either, whether the following passage, from Redruth, on

September 21, refers to her: "Your message by John Jones seems to supersede the necessity of my writing: Yet I think of sending a few civil lines, without entering into the merits of the cause. Is it not an excellent copy of our friend's countenance, to beg leave to live apart? *Quis enim negat?* If the unbeliever will depart, let her depart. But she will as soon leap into the sea" (*ib.*).

The repeated information "My wife gains ground," on December 26, 1761, and January 5, 1762, and "We join in love to Sally and you," on December 11, 1762, February 8 and March 6, 1763, show that she had been ill, and that they were still together (xii, 119, 122, 123, 125). That she dwelt at the Foundery in May, 1764, appears from this query: "Dear Brother,—Is there any reason why you and I should have no further intercourse with each other? I know none; although possibly there are persons in the world who would not be sorry for it. . . . How are John Jones, Downes, and Richardson? and my best friend, and yours?" (xii, 126.)

"My wife, who has been very ill, but is much better, joins with me in wishing Mrs. Blackwell and you every blessing which is purchased for you with the blood of the covenant," we read at the close of a letter from Sunderland, on May 6, 1766 (xii, 192). On Monday, 19, he set out from Newcastle for Scotland with her and her daughter (Lady Maxwell's Life, 24; Tyerman, II, 567). In August they were in London, which

they left on Sunday, 24, for Bath and Bristol; then it was that Charles described his sister-in-law as continuing quite placid and tame (II, 247; John, III, 262).

The next glimpse of her we get on August 14, 1768, when John notes at Bristol: "Hearing my wife was dangerously ill, I took chaise immediately, and reached the Foundery before one in the morning. Finding the fever was turned, and the danger over, about two I set out again, and in the afternoon came (not at all tired) to Bristol," where the Conference was sitting (III, 340). A sure sign that he had not grown quite careless of her; and to her he wrote a tender letter.

But on December 17 he tells Charles: "I hear nothing from or of our friend at Newcastle," where she had retired as soon as convalescent. "I am now a mere Fellow of a College again," he adds (xii, 137). According to old standing regulations, on June 1, 1751, having taken wife, it had been his duty to resign his Lincoln College fellowship, which no amount of non-residence had vacated till then (II, 231-232). His involuntary celibacy could not now restore his academic rights to him, despite his wistful looking back upon his former life (xii, 141).

"For what cause I know not to this day," runs the entry in his Journal under Wednesday, January 23, 1771—"set out for Newcastle, purposing 'never to return.' *Non eam reliqui: Non dimisi: Non revocabo*" (III, 423).

This sounds as if the breach would have been final. Yet, in June, 1772, she is once more riding with him in his chaise through Yorkshire. "Tuesday 30. Calling at a little inn on the Moors, I spoke a few words to an old man there, as my wife did to the woman of the house" (III, 475). His asking Charles, from Londonderry, on June 2, 1775: "Has my friend taken an house at Bristol? Is Noah with her? What are they doing?" (xii, 142) suggests no very intimate intercourse between them at that date. Which supposition is confirmed in the following letter, written September 1, 1777:—

"My Dear,—I sincerely wish a Reunion with you, if it could be upon good terms. Otherwise it would not continue; and this the last error would be worse than the first. But what are those terms on which it probably would continue? In order to know, we must state the case, which I will do as briefly as I can, leaving out all unnecessary circumstances.

"Some years since, without my Consent or Knowledge, you left me and settled at Newcastle. I received you again without any terms, nay, without any acknowledgment that you had done wrong.

"Two years ago you left me again without my Consent or Knowledge.

"A few days since, I met you, and (to my great surprise) found you willing to return. I was willing to receive you upon these terms: 1. Restore my Papers. 2. Promise to take no more.

"But upon reflection I see I was too hasty. For you have given Copies of my Papers, and these you cannot recall. Likewise you have spoken all manner of evil against me, particularly to my Enemies and the enemies of the cause I live to support. Hereby many bad men have triumphed, been confirmed in their evil ways: and many good but weak men have been stumbled and some have drawn back to perdition. A sword has been put into the hands of the enemies of God, and the children of God have been armed against one another."

As a matter of fact, in the very heat of the doctrinal controversy raised by Wesley's asking in the famous Minutes of Conference, 1770, how "to be rewarded according to our works, yea because of our works, differs from 'for the sake of our works'?" and how differs this from *secundum merita operum*? which is no more than, 'as our works deserve'" (viii, 337-338), a controversy in which no abuse was considered too foul, no weapon too treacherous to be used against opponents, Mrs. Wesley had chosen to read to a party of hostile Calvinists letters stolen from her husband, misinterpreting spiritual expressions, interpolating words, and mutilating sentences. It was agreed to send them to the *Morning Post* for publication, where *Scorpion* and *Snapdragon* professed to ground charges against John Wesley on his own private papers. This had occurred at the close of 1775 and beginning of 1776 (Tyerman, III, 233-

234; R. Watson, *Wesley*, 220-221: Miss Sarah Wesley's letter).

"Things standing thus," John's letter goes on, "if I was to receive you just now without any acknowledgment or reparation of these wrongs, it would be esteemed by all reasonable men a confirmation of what you have said.

"It may be asked, 'What Reparation are you either able or willing to make?' I know not if you are willing to make any. If you are, what reparation are you able to make? Very little indeed, for the water is spilled, and cannot be gathered up again. All you can do now, if you are ever so willing, is to Unsay What you have said. For instance, you have said over and over, That I have lived in adultery These Twenty Years. Do you believe this, or do you not? If you do, how can you think of living with such a Monster? If you do not, give it me under your hand. Is not this the least that you can do?" (*Wesley Studies*, 103-104.)

One single mention of her further occurs in the *Journal*: "1781, Friday, October 12.—I came to London, and was informed that my wife died on Monday. This evening she was buried, though I was not informed of it till a day or two after" (iv, 218).

"This slight, we may be sure," comments a recent writer, "was not by the wife's dying request, but came probably from Noah Vazeille, who was big enough and bad enough to dislike from the

first a strict and religious step-father" (Th. McCullagh, *Wesley Studies*). By him was 'the Account of an Amour of John Wesley, the chief of the Methodist Sect,' now in the British Museum, given to a London Notary Public. Indeed, not one record of her husband's previous tender impulses seems to have escaped Mrs. Wesley's infuriated curiosity.

IV

MARY VAZEILLE AND GRACE MURRAY

DOES not the mere coupling of their names sound almost sacrilegious? "His good angel" Charles ironically used to style the former; would not the latter truly have been John's guardian spirit, ministering to him as much happiness as he actually experienced misery?

John Hampson, the earliest of Wesley's biographers, deems it to be obvious, "though no great encomium of his knowledge of the sex, that, had he searched the kingdom through, he could not have pitched upon a person less proper for a gentleman in his situation" (II, 125-127). Southey roundly proclaims "she deserves to be classed in a triad with Xantippe and the wife of Job, as one of the three bad wives." Tyerman describes her as a woman "of no education, beyond the ability to read and write"; as a faithless woman, guilty of perfidy and meanness. "As a rule, she was a bitter, unmitigated curse." Wesley's marriage was "one of the greatest blunders he ever made . . . an act of folly" (I, 102-103, 106, 111, 113, 114-115; III, 233).

"When I read this, I thought of Burke's words on the insults offered to the Dauphiness Marie Antoinette: 'The age of chivalry is gone' . . .

exclaims a recent writer, who vigorously takes up the cudgels on Mrs. Wesley's behalf (Thomas McCullagh, *Wesley Studies*, 116).

First of all, her husband was under deep money obligations to her. An autograph letter shows she accommodated him for his book establishment. On May 31, 1774, she writes: "My dear,—Your laconic letter from Edinburgh, May 18, would have seemed strange if I had not known you. You desire me to let W. Pine have a hundred pounds, with fifty to John Atlay, also fifty to the paper-maker. Amazing! Surely you must have forgot your writing to Mr. Lewis on May 6, for W. Pine to have two hundred, that the rest might be lent to Kingswood School" (*ib.*, 117). Which at least shows that, even so late as this, he still trusted her with the management of large sums.

Nor was his tone always so temperate as would appear from the above quotations. "At length know me, and know yourself. Your enemy I cannot be; but let me be your friend. Suspect me no more, asperse me no more, provoke me no more. Do not any longer contend for mastery, for power, for money, or praise. Be content to be a private, insignificant person, known and loved by God and me. Of what importance is your character to mankind; if you were buried just now, or if you had never lived, what loss would it be to the cause of God? Attempt no more to abridge me of my liberty, which I claim by the laws of God and man. Leave me to be governed

by God and my own conscience. Then shall I govern you with gentle sway, and show that I do indeed love you even as Christ the Church" (Stonehouse, *Isle of Axholme*, 193 note; Fitchett, *Wesley*, 470).

If ever, as Hampson will have it, Wesley's situation at the head of a sect and the authority it conferred had charmed the aspiring ambition of Mary Vazeille, she must have been sadly disappointed. Neither was her husband at all inclined to share it with her, nor his followers in a mood to bow to her. Her letter of May 31, 1774, almost pathetically proceeds to recite the many petty annoyances to which she had daily to submit. "Honest John Pawson makes it his business to slander me, wherever he goes, saying: 'Mrs. Wesley has several hundred pounds in her hands belonging to Mr. Wesley, but how he will ever get it from her, I know not, except he puts her to trouble for it, for I do not believe there is a more covetous-minded woman in the world than she is.' In this way, he and J. Allen, and your old quondam friend, Mary Madan, did all they could to render my life bitter while at Bristol. Mary Madan, the very day you set off from Bristol, said, 'I hope Mrs. Wesley is not to stay here till Mr. Wesley returns, for, if she does, this society will be quite ruined.' There were many high words between her and some of the stewards the night I and Mr. Lewis came from setting you out of town. It was true I had a horse, but in

this I was soon made to *see* and *feel* her power, for whenever I wanted to ride, she would contrive to send the man out on some trifling thing or other, so that I have been fourteen days together without riding at all ; and when I did, I was sure to be lectured by your man telling me he had enough to do for Mr. Charles Wesley and Mrs. Madan. As I could not use my horse there, and Mr. Lewis telling me Mr. Charles Wesley wanted him to hire one for the man to ride by the side of their carriage, and that it would save the society a guinea if I would lend my horse instead of their hiring one, I said, 'with all my heart.' But I was soon informed by your brother, that the London stewards would not like my horse to go ; that he must have three there himself ; and that a subscription was proposed to buy the third. It was no hard matter to find how I was circumstanced. As I could get no one to ride with me, I did not care to put you to the expense of keeping my horse, so I sold it. So that evil is removed. The next must be myself. Then the Methodists *must be a pure people*, when the troubler of their happiness and peace is removed. My dear friend, let me beg of you for God's sake, for your own sake, put a stop to this torrent of evil that is poured out against me. It is cruel to make me an offender for defending myself. If you or any others have anything to lay to my charge, let it be proved. I desire to be open to conviction ; but surely I have a right to do justice to myself,

when I have it in my power. The trials and persecutions I have met with lately, were they accompanied with any degree of guilt, would make me of all creatures most miserable ; but, bless God, He has hitherto kept me from a prey to my enemies ; though I am often tempted to fear I shall not hold out any longer, as I am a poor weak woman, alone against a formidable body.

“ I am your affectionate wife,

“ M. WESLEY.”¹

Of course, “ her common custom of saying things not true ” cannot but make us cautious how we believe her. Yet an accent of sincerity seems to run through her pitiful grievances. And they are just what we might expect after the storm raised at the Newcastle Orphan House by John’s first treating Grace Murray with marked attention. Whoever the great one’s favourite and spouse, she was sure to be hated by the fairer part of the societies.

Little comfort, meanwhile, could she derive from the union, under even the most auspicious circumstances. Unless he was ill, John Wesley on an average spent full nine months every year out of London. Even while taking up his abode at the Foundry, he would ceaselessly visit the neighbouring societies. Wedlock with him meant practically perpetual loneliness, or constantly attending him on his travels. Hear him explain

¹ Tyerman, II, 112-113.

to Mr. Blackwell on August 31, 1755, what the latter implied : " Experience confirms your advice both ways. In my last journey into the north, all my patience was put to the proof again and again ; and all my endeavour to please, yet without success. In my present journey I leap, as broke from chains. I am content with whatever entertainment I meet with, and my companions are always in good humour, 'because they are with me.' This must be the spirit of all who take journeys with me. If a dinner ill-dressed, a hard bed, a poor room, a shower of rain, or a dirty road, will put them out of humour, it lays a burden upon me, greater than all the rest put together. By the grace of God, I never fret. I repine at nothing ; I am discontented with nothing. And to have persons at my ear, fretting and murmuring at everything, is like tearing the flesh off my bones. I see God sitting upon his throne, and ruling all things well. Although, therefore, I can bear this, also,—to hear his government of the world continually found fault with ; (for in blaming the things which He alone can alter, we, in effect, blame Him ;) yet it is such a burden to me as I cannot bear without pain ; and I bless God when it is removed. The doctrine of a particular providence is what exceeding few persons understand, at least not practically, so as to apply it to every circumstance of life. This I want, to see God acting in everything, and disposing all, for his own glory, and his creature's good " (xii, 182-183).

A lesson he had learnt, twenty-five years before, from William Law's *Serious Call to a Holy and Devout Life* (ch. xxii). Yet none but the Prince of Darkness would have dreamt of charging God's Providence with the miserable condition of inns in most parts, and the wretched state of roads in nearly all parts of eighteenth-century England, as illustrated by contemporary records, not the least by Wesley's own Journals. To expect people never to grumble at them was a hard tax upon Christian perfection.

That very year 1755, on April 29, Charles was telling his wife from Leeds, just about to meet his brother: "I pity his poor wife, if now upon the road. There she is likely to stick till the warm weather comes. The roads are almost impassable for wheels" (II, 201). While travelling with her, entries in John's diary exhibit the whole range of meteorological disturbances. "1752, March 15.—I took horse with my wife and daughter. The tiles were rattling from the houses on both sides; but they hurt not us. . . . Tues. 17.—The rain continued without intermission, till we came to Enstone. Soon after we set out from thence, it was succeeded by so vehement a wind, as on Broadway-Hill often drove us clear out of the path, and was ready to carry away both horse and rider" (II, 251). Tuesday, Ap. 28.—"It rained all the way we rode to Stockton" (*ib.*, 259). From Whitehaven to Dublin, "it is generally a passage of four-and-twenty hours; but the wind

continuing contrary all the way, we did not reach this place till Friday evening" after embarking on Monday. "My wife and Jenny were extremely sick, particularly when we had a rolling sea; but a few days, I trust, will restore their strength. They are already much better than when they landed." This, on Monday, July 20 (to Mr. Blackwell, xii, 178).

At Nantwich, on their way to the north, on March 28, 1753, they "were saluted with curses and hard names" as soon as they entered the town (II, 283). At Launceston, in August, 1751, the mob gathered and attended them to the room, made much noise during the preaching, and threw all kinds of things at the people as they came out (*ib.*, 242). In April, 1752, Wesley was a little afraid she would not understand the behaviour of a Yorkshire mob: there had been no trial up to the 16th (xii, 176). But on the 24th, near Hull, "many behaved as if possessed by Moloch. Clods and stones flew about on every side; but they neither touched nor disturbed me. When I had finished my discourse, I went to take a coach; but the coachman had driven clear away. We were at a loss, till a gentlewoman invited my wife and me to come into her coach. She brought some inconveniences on herself thereby; not only as there were nine of us in the coach, three on each side, and three in the middle; but also as the mob closely attended us, throwing in at the windows (which we did not think it prudent to shut) whatever came next to hand. But a large

gentlewoman who sat in my lap, screened me, so that nothing came near me" (II, 257). One would like to know whether Mrs. Wesley was standing, or was likewise sheltered by a stout gentleman sitting in her lap. When they took horse the next day no wonder if some of the company "had dreadful forebodings of what was to be at York" (II, 258).

These, however, were not the most anxious times. "My wife set out for Bristol last week," Wesley somewhat composedly writes to Blackwell from Newcastle on May 23, 1752. "I hope her fears will prove groundless, and that all her children will live to glorify God. Anthony, I hear, is recovered already" (xii, 177). In January, 1754, he was drinking the water at the Hot-Well. "My wife," reads the matter-of-fact entry on Thursday, 31, "desiring to pay the last office to her poor dying child, set out for London, and came a few days before he went home, rejoicing and praising God" (II, 311). True, they were not his own issue. Had they been, we may assume he would not have behaved differently. With natural feelings well-nigh overgrown by devotion to his supernatural task, he might think it enough to board his eventual posterity at Kingswood school or at the Leytonstone Orphan-House. But neither of these establishments included a nursery. Moreover, a mother's heart is not so cheaply satisfied.

Unquestionably, Grace Murray was more inured

to Methodist circuit travelling than Anthony Vazeille the well-to-do London merchant's gentlewomanly widow. Her experience of the work had been more active. She had, for many years, actually gone through the ordeal, and valiantly proved herself able to face the dangers no less than to trample over the petty discomforts of itinerancy. Yet, as a married woman, she also would soon have been shackled by circumstances. How spiritedly, on being engaged to Charles Wesley, Sarah Gwynne not only promised to let him continue his travelling, but, when her mother would have got him to promise not to go again to Ireland, stood with him, saying she should be glad herself to visit the many gracious souls in that country (C. W., II, 52-53). Indeed, though not to Ireland, she attended him several times. Yet the physical and moral bonds of motherhood mostly compelled her to stay at home. Other than singularly short-lived children might likewise have blessed Grace's second wedlock. Nay, after she had become Mrs. John Bennet, in less than ten years five sons were born to her, who took up so much of her time, as far as we can judge from the scanty records of her life, that she was practically confined to such religious employment as prayer, reading, attending weekly meetings, and visiting the sick. The days of circuit travelling were gone for her also. Had she married John Wesley, the case would have proved just the same, unless their union had remained childless,

His wife or his work—his wife rather than his work—would have been doomed to frequent prolonged desertion. And the same teasings, the same jealousy which embittered Mrs. Vazeille's second marriage would have worried Grace Murray's. Remember the many bickerings at Newcastle Orphan-House, her repeated falling out with Sister Jackson, whom her inability to please in anything made it impossible for her, despite her devotion to the work, to stay any longer in Wesley's family (xx, 41, 46). In Lent, 1748, after Wesley had first given her public tokens of his particular esteem, and the sisters were more and more offended, remember how deeply she resented their unfriendliness (xx, 75). "Sister Murray must have a little pre-eminence," charitable Jeannie Keith took good care to inform Wesley. (J. Keith to Wesley, 1 November, 1748; Tyerman, I, 543). She was sure to be disappointed all round. Neither her husband nor the disciples to whose tender mercies he would often have left her would have suffered her to rule in any way. "If Grace Murray consult her ambition, she will marry Mr. Wesley; if she consult her love, she will marry you." Thus ran the sensible piece of advice volunteered to Bennet by one of the chief helpers, Joseph Cownley (Tyerman, II, 55). Her intimate acquaintance in London spoke still more to the point: "Sister M., never think of it. I know you thoroughly. It will never do. The People here would never suffer you. And your

spirit would not bear their behaviour. You have not humility enough, or meekness, or patience. You would be miserable all your life . . ." (xi).

Ever since they started on their apostolic career, both of the brothers had attracted that ambiguous variety of female admiration which not unfrequently clings to popular preachers. "Both John Wesley and Charles are dangerous snares to many young women. Several are in love with them. I wish they were married to some good sisters, though I would not give them one of mine, even if I had many" (Benham, *Memoirs*, 46-47). It is true Hutton, when thus writing to Zinzendorf on March 14, 1740, was on rather bad terms with the Wesleys, on account of their drifting away from the Moravians. That he was not merely retailing scandal appears on Wesley's own evidence in the above narrative. Among Grace's qualifications to become his wife, does he not mention the fact that "she would remove many hindrances from others, from women in particular. She would guard many from inordinate affection for me, to which they would be far less exposed, both because they would have far less hope of success, and because I should converse far more sparingly with them. Perhaps not in private with any young women at all; at least not with any members of our own Societies" (xxxix, 24). The last restriction an ominous one. But surely he would have gone even beyond it, particularly if Grace's inability always to accompany him had prevented.

her from everywhere taking her share of the work : regulating female classes and bands, examining, instructing, reproofing, comforting, etc. (*ib.*, 25). Then he must needs look to it himself. In any case, nothing could ever have hindered him from writing those letters of spiritual direction where his unquestionable zeal for souls curiously revels in devotional endearments. Dear Betsy, dear Hetty, dear Patty . . . ; by their pet names he likes to call fair correspondents (*Works*, xiii, 51, 76, 90) and occasionally to "thee" and "thou" them in scriptural language. We have seen in what strains he used to address Sarah Ryan : only try to realize the effect of such effusions as these falling into the hands of Grace Murray, now become Mrs. John Wesley. Coming back from their delightful ante-nuptial Irish tour, a few idle tales plausibly related concerning her betrothed and Molly Francis had incensed her to such rage that she forthwith "writ a loving letter to John Bennet," whom she had utterly neglected for the last five or six months (ix, x). Such revenge, let us hope, she would hardly have resorted to after the wedding ceremony. And we may trust that, unlike Mary Vazeille, even in bitterest disappointment, she would never have behaved like a shrew, never torn her husband's venerable locks, never forced his desk open, never stolen, touched up and spread abroad his letters. But what fuel these letters would have added to flame may be guessed from the warmth of her retrospective jealousy set

on fire by mere unsubstantial hearsay. Did not Charles work upon a feeling closely akin to this, in order finally to throw her into Bennet's arms, by telling her John had given her up and would have nothing more to say to her? (liv.) The same intense sensitiveness, easily wounded pride, and sudden vehement fits of jealousy would have preyed upon her, made her married life miserable, and ruined her household. "Instead of strengthening, you would weaken his hands. If you love yourself, or if you love him, never think of it more," her London friend had wisely concluded (xi.)

That there was still vast room for improvement in her character, at the time she married John Bennet, ought not to be obscured either by her subtle charm, or by Wesley's glowing portrait of her, or by those very conventional Memoirs which filial love has, from end to end, in monotonous profusion, illuminated with the idealized halo of saintliness. In fact, however harshly most of Wesley's biographers may have dealt with Mary Vazeille, Grace Murray, for the matter of that, has had nothing to envy her in that kind at the hands of some of them. "Without doubt, she was talented, talkative, and bewitching; her services, also, as a female itinerant, were popular, and, in a certain sense, successful; but Wesley's opinion of her character and piety were far higher than our own. The woman, who after a few years of high religious profession could, for so long a period,

sink into almost sceptical depression, and yet, all the while, meet her bands, and go through all the other Methodist duties prescribed for her, as though nought had happened" (it has already been noticed that the Wesleys were all along aware of the state of her soul, *Memoirs*, p. 17), "the woman who was almost constantly in hot water with her neighbours, and with the Orphan-House sisters; and who so infamously coquetted with the greatest reformer of the age, and with one of his most educated and able helpers,—was not the perfect saint that Wesley pictured her. She was a woman of energy, of dauntless resolution, and of a certain sort of religious zeal, and, late in life, she seems to have been a loving, lovely Christian; but, at the period of her dualistic worship, she was uneducated, vain, fickle, selfish, and presuming. Her husband wanted her, and got her; and we hope, and doubt not, that their married life was happy; but even Bennet was deserving of a more worthy wife; for, though his treatment of Wesley was, in the first instance, treacherous, and afterwards abusive, he was almost the only one of Wesley's itinerants who was a man of education and of property; and both before his marriage, and after it, was an earnest, zealous, brave, and useful preacher." So much in praise of John Bennet; in another passage, however, he falls under the common ban: "John Wesley was a dupe; Grace Murray was a flirt; John Bennet was a cheat. . . ." The fact is,

though John doubtless loved her, "she was not worthy of his love." Finally, "we bid adieu to Wesley's flirting sweetheart, and his rival lover; and with deep regret, begrudge the space we have felt it right to give them" (Tyerman, II, 55-56).

Present-day Methodists, let us own, generally acknowledge and deprecate the sour austerity of the Rev. Luke Tyerman, who thundered this unchivalrous indictment. Contrast it with Henry Moore's opinion that "the person on whom Mr. Wesley's affections were placed, was in every respect worthy of them" (II, 164); with Jackson's verdict that "the object of his choice, for her piety, love, zeal, simplicity, and Christian usefulness, was not unworthy of his confidence and affection," although her vacillating "was not consistent with Christian simplicity and honour" (I, 535, 539); last, not least, with Dr. Rigg's rapturous encomiums on her singular tact, attractive modesty, perfect propriety, and deep piety, and superior character as evinced by her diary. She was no unworthy helpmeet for John Wesley. It is hard to suspect her of flirtation. For the painful vacillation she was kept in, opposers only are responsible. She only showed not a little weakness. Her still meeting classes amidst temptation against faith is countenanced by Richard Baxter and many other instances. Through his lack of sympathy with spirits exercised by sore doubt and temptation, Tyerman has been guilty of unintentional, yet serious injustice towards her. He has uttered a

summary judgment in a case of no little perplexity and difficulty. The knots he has tried to cut with a coarse knife are to be untied by a skilful hand (*Living Wesley*, 2nd edition, 200-204).

Without going the full length of Dr. Rigg's enthusiasm, there is every reason for cautiously following in his footsteps. The case, he rightly hints, is one of no little perplexity, were it only on this account, that it concerns a woman: that is, most people will allow, a being in nearly all cases more enigmatic than we are, with more finely wrought and highly pitched sensorial centres, more subtle and quicker processes of thought, more baffling veering of will. Now it is remarkable, apart perhaps from Mary Vazeille, whom it is very doubtful whether he ever was really smitten with, how thoroughly feminine, each in her own different way, Wesley's sweethearts all were: Sarah Kirkham,¹ the gifted, intellectual lady writer; Mary Granville, the brilliant yet serious-minded aristocratic charmer; Sophy Hopkey,² the winsome, innocent-looking jilt. As for elusive complexity bordering on contradictoriness, Grace Murray was far more feminine than any of them: her actions obeyed other than the plain rectilinear laws of logical reason; they

¹ That Sarah, not Elizabeth, Kirkham was John Wesley's *Varanese* obviously results from the fact that Elizabeth died in July, 1732, whereas Charles mentions seeing Varanese as late as March 30, 1737 (*Journal*, I, 70; Mrs. Delany, I, 360, 374).

² On the Hopkey love affair, see J. Wesley's *Journal*, standard edition, I, 280-400.

worked in close dependence upon fleeting moods, tenuous impressions, not seldom puzzling impulses, originating, no doubt, quite as much in the physiologic as in the psychologic depths of her being.

Without laying undue stress on the power of the body over the mind, nor launching upon a pathological enquiry, the accuracy of which face to face observation and direct medical diagnosis themselves would hardly be qualified to warrant, it is impossible not to be struck by the many strange phenomena that Wesley's own short partial account brings to light in the life of Grace Murray. And these wonderfully tally with what, a few years before, Dr. George Cheyne had described as the "English malady," so common had it just become in the British islands, under the manifold pressure of radical and rapid social developments. Vapours were the first stage of it, followed up by "higher and more eminent degrees." Cheyne's *Treatise on Health and Long Life*, which so much influenced Wesley at Oxford, had already delineated "a kind of melancholy, which is called religious, because it is conversant about matters of religion, although often the persons so distempered have little solid piety. And this is merely a bodily disease, produced by an ill-habit or constitution, wherein the nervous system is broken and disordered and the juices are become viscid and glewy. This melancholy arises generally from a disgust or disrelish of worldly amusements and creature comforts,

whereupon the mind turns to religion for consolation and peace; but as the person is in a very imperfect and unmortified state, not duly instructed and disciplined, and ignorant how to govern himself, there ensues fluctuation and indocility, scrupulosity, horror, and despair" (*Treatise on Health*, 122-124).

Nowhere, indeed, have the dangers of the theological doctrine of Assurance, so well pointed out in Dr. Workman's masterly introduction to a recent *History of Methodism* (p. 28-31), been better exemplified than in the anxious, uninterrupted self-examining, brain-racking doubts and fears, maddening distrust of salvation, which terrifically fill up most of Grace's account of herself. Coleridge would have argued that she, as well as J. Haime, whose sorrowful case he laments, "should have been drawn out of herself, or rather out of the morbid acts and products which she took for herself" (*Notes on Southey's Life of W.*, 1858, II, 31 note).

Wesley, it is true, indignantly spurns the hypothesis that Scriptural demoniacs were only diseased persons, and that the diseases ascribed to the operations of the Devil had the very same symptoms with the natural diseases of lunacy, epilepsy, convulsions (*Notes on the New Testament*, I, 52-53, 148). In his journal, after relating a visit to a gentleman "troubled with what they call lowness of spirits," he remarks, "Many such have I been with before; but, in several of them,

it was no bodily distemper. They wanted something, they knew not what; and were, therefore, heavy, uneasy, and dissatisfied with everything. The plain truth is, they wanted God, they wanted Christ, they wanted faith. And God convinced them of their want, in a way their physicians no more understood than themselves. Accordingly nothing availed till the Great Physician came. For, in spite of all natural means, He who made them for Himself, would not suffer them to rest, till they rested in Him" (I, 210-211). A very tenable theory, which he repeatedly urges. Yet, in another place, he merely contends we could not conclude that evil spirits had no hand therein, supposing God should suffer them to occasion many of those diseases which yet might appear to be purely natural: owing to their power to affect immediately the origin of the nerves in the brain, the symptoms would be those of over-tense nerves, as in madness, epilepsies, convulsions, or of relaxed nerves as in paralysis (*Notes on New Testament*, 52-53).

Let us be content with Grace Murray's plain symptoms. "Instability and unsettledness in all the intellectual operations. . . . Sometimes unaccountable fits of laughing, apparent joy, leaping, dancing. At other times, crying, grief, anguish," Cheyne observes. From her earliest years she exhibited a characteristic alternation of equally abnormal exaltation and depression, the latter first reaching its lowest mark with the death of

her child (*Memoirs*, 5). Loss of memory, scarce any sense or knowledge of what they do or is done them: "For a week I continued with only intervals of sense, nor did I ever recover the memory I had before" (MS. xx, 37). "Vertigo, giddiness, staggering . . . convulsive hypochondriacal or hysterical fits, and faintings which leave drowsiness, lethargy, extreme lowness of spirits for some time afterwards . . . dropping down suddenly, as if shot" (Cheyne: *English Malady*, 199, 252). Pain communicated through the whole habit (*ib.*, 219). How many times does Grace mention her dropping down to the ground, and losing her senses! (MS. xx, 16, 17, 21, 37, 47, 60). Her colour suddenly changes; she roars aloud in dreadful agony both of body and soul. Sometimes she is so weak that "two are obliged to lead her home" (47, 53, 54). Then she yearns for rest and complete seclusion: she wanders about in fields and solitary places "and would gladly have been always there" (55). She wishes she had never been born (52); desires death rather than life, and loathes the thought of living long, and the more willingly fasts for several days together, because she found it impaired her bodily strength (57). Yea, once in Newcastle, she is violently tempted to throw herself down and dash her brains out, in a paroxysm of unspeakable horror and despair (47). This comes very near the height of nervous disorders, when people "would tear, bruise, destroy themselves, if not withheld"

(Cheyne, 253). Nor are the physical symptoms less striking: "I was shrunk almost into a Skeleton" (MS. 55). "Frequently, in the midst of all this, my body was so affected, that the bed shook under me: and I felt as if one had begun at the crown of my head, and flayed off my skin, yea, my flesh and all, to the very soles of my feet" (*ib.*, 51). "Of a sudden, I was struck with sharp pain from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. Immediately I was in a burning fever" (*ib.*, 64). Yet, she "recovered her strength in a few days, to the surprise of all that saw her" (65). "The power of darkness fell upon me, and overwhelmed both my body and soul. . . . My body felt as if it was all empty and burnt up, so that I could compare it to nothing but a piece of wood which had been burnt to a coal. The next day I was in racking pain: and the next evening I was in the same condition as before. I continued thus till I fell asleep. But sleep brought no relief. I was scared with dreams and terrified with visions" (60). "Wandering and delusory images on the brain," Cheyne says (*English Malady*, 199).

It is very questionable whether such answers, impressed on her mind, as "Thou shalt be saved at the last . . ." (§ 43), such words struck to her heart as "This is the Cup of which the Son of God drank . . ." (§ 53) are more than an echo of her dominant preoccupations or Biblical reading. Neither is her descrying God the Father looking upon her through his Son (§ 21) to be taken literally at all.

There remains, nevertheless, a long, weird train of voices, visions, dreams, and premonitory feelings: her seeing her husband pursued by the Spaniards, but escaping from them (§ 22); her dreaming, when only four years old, she saw God sitting upon His Throne, coming down to judge the world (§ 1); more striking and terrific, her feeling, one night of May 1742, a weight come upon her feet, lie by her side at the full length of a man, and roll upon the ground, her husband's corpse in his coffin (§ 35); her telling her mother, one morning, she would see her husband the same day; her feeling thoroughly convinced her father would never recover; her realizing, before a neighbour had told her, that Alexander Murray had been pressed, or that he was not on board the *Prince Frederick* (§§ 31-33, 36); it being stamped on her mind, while she was laid up, that "in three years she would see a great change" (§ 69). Notice, by the way (§§ 31-32) her naïve pride in her own superior foresight.

That, in 1745, she was seized with an inexpressible sense of God's judgments hanging over the nation does not mean much. "I was always in trouble, but could not tell for what," she also states in her *Memoirs*. "Mr. Charles Wesley was there for some time. When he preached his farewell sermon, he said: 'If I am a messenger of God to preach the Gospel unto you (mark what I say), before you see my face again, you will have the Man on the Red Horse, and the Man on the Pale

Horse.' When he spoke these words the whole auditory trembled. I myself was there, and felt the mighty power of God. And it was not long ere we experienced the truth of his message: we had both war and death in abundance" (*Memoirs*, 57-58). Now turn to Charles Wesley's *Journal*. "Thur. Dec. 13.—I took my leave in Acts xx. It was a solemn time of prayer and love" (I, 386-390). This, his last visit before the Pretender's invasion, took place in November and December, 1744. Though Charles Edward did not succeed in landing until July 25, and the standard of the Stuarts was raised on August 29, 1745, only, an earlier attempt had failed in November. As early as February, 1744, the French fleet would have crossed the Channel but for a storm; in March, France had declared war against England. In November, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and a proclamation issued against Papists and Nonjurors. The political excitement had been great throughout the year (Lecky, II, 15-30; Stampe, 57). So that Grace's way of putting it is somewhat misleading, when she describes herself as "mourning day and night before the least appearance of disturbances in Scotland." Her presentiments had nothing prophetic in them.

A more interesting case of clairvoyance is where, in the midst of breakfast, she cries: "I see Mr. Charles Wesley. He is not far off"; a few minutes before he and Perronet actually came to

the gate" (§ 71). Of course, they may have been expected, and the very hour of their arrival known beforehand. This, however, is by no means an unparalleled occurrence in Methodist records. Wesley relates that, being sent for to Kingswood to one who had been ill before, this woman, while he was still three miles off on the road in a violent rain, cried out, "Yonder comes Wesley galloping as fast as he can" (J., I, 236). Another day, a woman in a violent agony, starting up, said: "Now they have done. They have just done. Cennick prayed and Humphreys preached. And they are coming hither as fast as they can." And indeed both came in quickly after (*ib.*, 296). So many facts of the same sort are well authenticated, that his reporting these is no sufficient reason for doubting them.

Now it is not to be concluded that Grace Murray's personal religion, any more than Methodism, popular Christianity, or supernatural faith in general, was a mere form of epilepsy and morbid overgrowth. The genuineness of her moral and spiritual endeavour has its test in her later years; and the more strenuous it must have been as she was more heavily burthened with her temperament. Thus much had to be premised before attempting to clear up her psychologic peculiarities. Whatever their religious significance, her bodily symptoms betoken, to say the least, an abnormal condition of the nervous system, and a singular standard of sensibility.

Both the earnestness and the instability of her nature bear testimony to it. There always is something excessive and unsound about her, whether she allows herself to be swallowed up in pleasures and worldly diversions (§ 7), or plunges into mystical trances; whether she gives her heart to the creature or the Creator (§ 8). The sentimental turn of her mind is strongly marked in her early piety, in the depth to which the merely human aspects of Christ's sufferings affect her when six years of age (§ 2), in her desire to be always at church about seven years old (§ 3); in her heart's melting down, when she first went to hear Whitefield, before he had spoken or even appeared: at the mere singing of the people "she felt a sweetness she had never felt before" (§ 12). Likewise, the first time she fixed her eyes upon Wesley, when he stood up and looked round on the congregation, before his mouth had opened, she "felt an inexpressible conviction that he was sent of God" (§ 14). Doctrinal difficulties she will practically never know: Predestinarianism attracts her for a moment (§ 49), because it just then harmonizes with her passing mood. Her fleeting doubts whether Christ is God (§ 47, 56), whether there is a God, whether she has a soul, do not spring from any rational process of thought: they are the effect, not the cause, of "the cloud falling in a moment on her body as well as soul" (§ 47); and they are promptly laid to rest by unpretending arguments. In her, feelings perpetu-

ally ebb and flow, and she will be nothing but passionate tenderness : no sooner is her soul overpowered with the love of God, than she loves all mankind ; she finds a continual desire to do good to all ; she gives away whatever she has and can spare, including her mother's bread and meat (§ 3-4). She marries: her husband's love banishes all other thoughts (§ 9). At the death of her child, she pines away and seems near to lose her senses (§ 13). When she knows herself a damned sinner, she can neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep, nor do any kind of business (§ 17). Then suddenly her heart is full of prayer, which leaves room for no other care (§ 21, 22). John Brydon's turning careless is enough to overwhelm her with utter darkness and despair. Now she loathes life and longs for death (§ 47). Now she only wishes to spend and be spent for the salvation of mankind: exhausting outward activity is, indeed, the best outlet and diversion she can find. She worships Wesley in a way that almost terrifies him (viii).

Every emotion comes upon her as a shock, which she is hardly able to bear without fainting and illness (xx, 11, 21, 27, 37, 43). In each single case, she entirely and impetuously gives herself up to the mood of the moment. But these moods, with dizzying rapidity, succeed and supplant each other. Whitefield's eloquence speedily lulls away the mother's grief. She does not long remain disconsolate again at his going away, when Wesley steps into his place.

None easier to be influenced: the mere sight of the Portsmouth gentlewoman constantly repairing to church and sacrament has sown the first seed of godliness in her soul (§9). "Twice every day she passed by my room, with her book under her arm, and her daughters with her, to retire into her chamber to prayers. This struck me in such a manner, that I wished to do as she did. O! the goodness of God! it astonishes me even now to think of it, how I must be brought hither, to be taught to pray!" (*Memoirs*, 3-4.) Before she had reached the place where Whitefield was to preach at Blackheath, she heard the people singing hymns: "The very sound set all my passions afloat, though I did not know one word they uttered, which plainly shows, how the affections may be greatly moved, while the understanding is quite dark." The preacher stood up: "something in his face I never saw in any human face before." It is enough to draw her wholly towards God, though as to the text of the sermon, Jesus's saying in John iii, 3, she was as much in the dark as Nicodemus, and "wondered what it was to be born again" (*Memoirs*, 6; cf. MS., §12). The casual reading of a chapter in Jeremiah is enough to revive hope in her soul (§17). About Christmas, 1744, some conversation with Mr. Briggs at once eases her mind: her doubt concerning the sins of John Brydon being imputed to her is removed, and the horrible dread taken away (§61). For ghostly direction and some sort of unburthen-

ing process such as is supplied by Catholic absolution or mutual confession in Methodist bands, the likes of her almost physically crave.

Whatever her resolution and courage in face of threats or actual danger (§ 24), she seems unable to withstand persuasion. And she is aware of it. Being much importuned by her father, and by a young man whom she is utterly averse to marry, the only course she can think of is to escape from both and fly to her sister's in London (§ 6). Just after she has told Wesley she loves him a thousand times better than any one else, John Bennet on one side and David Trathen on the other urging her all the evening and vowing they would not go all night unless they had an answer, she at length gives in: "I will marry John Bennet" (§ xiv).

Neither her hesitations, nor her backwards-and-forwards skipping from one to the other, are therefore to be construed as deliberate coquetry. Not but that there might be a touch of self-conscious artfulness in some parts of her behaviour and utterances: where she tells Wesley, for instance, of her writing a loving letter to Bennet, or where she shows Bennet Wesley's love letters (ix, xii), where she prophetically mentions in her account to Wesley the great change that was to take place in three years (§ 69); where she speaks of destroying whatever it was whereby she had been a snare to men, that she might never hurt any man more (§ 57). One might also detect a flavour of religious

cant in such passages as this, after mentioning her Orphan-House sisters' displeasure : " But I did not as yet perceive any resentment towards them. Only I was grieved because they hurt their own souls " (§ 74).

On the whole, she was undeniably sincere. Her religious efforts obviously resulted in gradual improvement. Nor is there any doubt that her worldly affections were unfeigned : only she was, every minute, under the absolute control of the dominant emotion ; and her various emotions were frequently inconsistent. That she was positively fond of John Bennet, and did not simply fall back upon him in the last instance for want of his better, is evidenced by the fluctuations of her feelings for two years, whenever she met him or heard from him. That she distrusted her own power to keep true to him in the midst of other entreaties, and was really anxious to keep true to him, is shown by her half-pathetic, half-comical request to him, as Wesley was to take her to Ireland, to meet her at Sheffield if he loved her ; if he did not, she could not answer for what might follow (§ vi). At this time, between her and Wesley there had been a sort of verbal pledge but no actual contract ; and she could not think what he proposed would ever come to pass (vii ; xvi, 10). As the prospect became more real to her, compassion for Bennet remained one of her leading motives : she was afraid he would run mad (xiv). Perhaps her forwarding him Wesley's letters was mistakenly

meant as the most likely way to cure his passion by letting him know how hopeless it now was.

Her relation to Wesley was of a more composite description. It has not been sufficiently noticed that it was of long standing. "The fellow-labourer in the Gospel whom he had been forming to his hand for ten years," this is Wesley's phrase in his letter to Bennet (xvi, 13). Of her he writes in another place, he knew whatever others thought, she had, for ten years, loved him as her own soul (xlvi). These words accurately represent the position on both sides. He had first taken an interest in her as a proper person to help him, not as the most proper to marry. She, from the first, had almost unawares entertained the tenderest gratitude for him. After many years, she had not forgotten his preaching at Moorfields, on Sunday, September 9, 1739: "'Is there any one here that has a true desire to be saved?' My heart replied, 'Yes, I have.' He added, 'My soul for thine, if thou continue laying at the feet of Jesus.' On this word I took hold; for I was like a person drowning who would catch hold of anything to save life" (*Memoirs*, 7). Was he not, under God, so to say, her saviour? The man at whose call she had begun to understand what it was to be born again, and to wake up to the life from above? (xx, 14.) A father, indeed, and more than a father? (xvi, 13.) Whom she honoured as such to the very last?

(*Memoirs*, 20-21). One for whom she experienced such deep esteem and respect, as he often trembled at? (viii.) A popular preacher, too, and a powerful leader of men. Thankfulness, piety, admiration, it may be also vanity and a desire of eminence, all concurred to centre her looks and her thoughts upon him. As soon as he spoke of marrying her, she might easily mistake for love this many-stranded attraction, even had there been in it not a particle of true love. She had, however, so long cherished that feeling without identifying it with love, that she now durst hardly call it so, nor quite turn aside from the subaltern preacher, more on a level with herself—though a man of education and property!—whom she had nursed for twenty-six weeks and elected for her bridegroom. Was it possible that the great man would ever condescend actually to marry her? Her attitude towards him, in spite of her faithfulness, freedom and plainness of speech, was more of a worshipper than a bride. Whether she misinterpreted or not her genuine inmost feelings, they were none the less intense; the final foiling of them was none the less grievous. Though, after she had heard in Newcastle of her supposed desertion, wounded pride, if not a highly refined sense of dignity, drove her to John Bennet's feet, the mainspring of her ultimate renouncement lay in the idea of preserving from ruin the Work of God together with the worker she tenderly revered. She

thought she was complying with his wishes. John's analysis of her behaviour and clashing emotions sounds, on this point, exceedingly probable (xlix, li). Only add, that she was, more or less consciously, bent on securing one or the other of them ; that, for that purpose, she had been all along, more or less deliberately, playing them against each other ; and, since one was so slow or so reluctant to make up his mind, it was better, after all, to be content with the other.

Long as she had been acquainted with John Wesley, Charles, we must not forget, had known her almost as long, and quite as thoroughly ; he had first admitted her into their Society ; he had seen her at intervals ever since ; he was admittedly a more acute judge of human nature than his brother. "Many times you see farther into men than I do," the latter acknowledged (xii, 152). To Grace Murray he was no enemy : "My heart is with you and yours. Dear Grace ! Fear not ! In six troubles the Lord has saved you. My partner salutes you in the love that never faileth," he writes to Mr. and Mrs. J. Bennet on August 10, 1750 (Fitchett, 464). As this part of his *Journal* has been deliberately suppressed, it is difficult to say and risky to conjecture what his motives really were. "Whenever he saw some things wrong," Whitehead remarked, "his fears suggested to him, that there might be many more which he did not see ; and the natural warmth of his temper," (and his great sincerity, Henry Moore

interjects) "led him to use expressions abundantly more severe than the case required" (Moore, *Wesley*, II, 177). That his brother's marrying a servant, and one so low-born, appeared above measure shocking to him (xxvii) was not perhaps so very absurd, considering John's public character and responsibilities (cf. Tyerman, II, 55). That he was not far wrong to infer therefrom that it would appear so to all mankind, and consequently break up the Societies and put a stop to the whole work of God, derives support from Jeannie Keith's depicting all the town in an uproar, and all the Societies ready to fly in pieces (xxix), as well as from the scenes at the Orphan-House, where some members' disgraceful excitement went so far as to consign their spiritual leader to the pit (liii).

In laying all the blame upon his brother, Charles was simply acting upon what information he had been able to gather at Newcastle, Leeds, and Bristol (xxviii, xxix); namely, that John was in love with Grace beyond all sense and reason; that he had shown it in the most public manner and averred it to all the Society; above all, that she was previously engaged to another man. No doubt, so dishonest an action was sure to destroy both John and the whole work of God (xlvi).

"Fain would I hope that you can say something in your defence which now I know not. . . . Still I *will* suspend my judgment in that love which hopeth all things," he is guarded enough to

put in. Notwithstanding, there is no gainsaying Tyerman's verdict that "He was a sincere, but irritated, impetuous, and officious friend . . . he was culpable for the impetuosity of his interference, and for some of the means he used to effect his purpose; but his alarm was reasonable, and his interposition needed" (II, 55). Thomas Jackson, in his biography of Charles Wesley, comes to the same conclusion: "Though Mr. Charles Wesley's motives are above suspicion (for a more upright man never lived), yet it must be conceded that the manner of his interference was indefensible. He had no right absolutely to judge and determine for his brother in a matter so sacred. Counsel and remonstrance he might have given, and that with all the earnestness of which he was capable; but beyond this he was not justly authorized to proceed. Had it been proved to Mr. John Wesley that the woman whom he was engaged to marry was betrothed to another man, it is not to be conceived that he would have persevered in his design of making her his wife" (I, 540).

Another extract from Jackson is still more to the point: "The fact is, Charles regarded his brother as providentially called to superintend that extensive revival of religion which had now, for several years, been carried on by their joint labours and that of their fellow-helpers. To preserve this work in unimpaired efficiency and extend it according to their hopes he knew would require his

brother constantly to itinerate through Great Britain and Ireland; and such incessant journeying was incompatible with the comfort of a married life. The correctness of this opinion was amply proved by subsequent events of Mr. John Wesley's personal history" (*ib.*, 539).

What appeared above measure shocking to Charles was not so much the thought of his brother's marrying Grace Murray as, in John's very words, the thought of his marrying at all (MS., xxvii). Nor was he a bit less thunderstruck, sixteen months later, before the person had ever been named to him, by his brother telling him he was resolved to marry (C. W., II, 78). And quite right he was, since John's marrying at all either meant that, in his conjugal fondness, he would neglect and sacrifice what they held to be the revival of Christianity, or that he would slight and practically desert his wife, make his home wretched, thereby again give an advantage to his enemies, and injure his evangelizing influence.

Has not, indeed, Charles been rather unsparingly censured for settling down as a regular parish minister—a sort of zealous pluralist dividing his yearly labours between the London and Bristol Societies? "No man can serve two masters . . . he will hold to one and despise the other" (Luke xvi, 13). No man can serve God with the untiring energy John Wesley did and at the same time take proper care of a family. "No trap so mischievous to the field-preacher as wedlock. Matri-

mony has quite maimed poor Charles, and might have spoiled John and George [Whitefield], if a wise Master had not graciously sent them a brace of ferrets." Such was the view imparted to Lady Huntingdon by their common friend John Ber-ridge, the eccentric vicar of Everton, whom timely Bible oracles, eight or nine years before, when grievously tormented with housekeepers, had prevented from "looking out for a Jezebel" himself (*Life of Lady H.*, I, 389).

John Hampson's less humorous judgment seems to hit nearer the mark: "Much wonder that Mr. Wesley should have appeared, in this instance, so little acquainted with himself and with human nature. He certainly did not possess the conjugal virtues. He had no taste for the tranquillity of domestic retirement: while his situation, as an itinerant, kept him constantly in motion, and left him little leisure for those attentions which are absolutely necessary to the comfort of married life" (*Memoirs of Wesley*, II, 127).

Thus, without any particular dispensation of Providence, his wedding at all was naturally bound to prove a failure; and the odds are that the event would have been very nearly the same had he married Grace Murray instead of Mary Vazeille.

V

JOHN WESLEY'S CHARACTER

SO much for what Tyerman rightly describes as, in its ultimate effects, one of the great events in Wesley's history (II, 48). But the more lasting value of it lies in the light it throws, as no other episode in his life at once so completely and succinctly does, on the recesses and on the intimate working of John Wesley's character.

First of all, it gives us some insight into the personal element, which has been obscured or overgrown by the public activity of the great reformer. And, whereas one would readily conceive of him as all engrossed by his task, stiffly one-sided, lacking in most of the cares and sympathies that make up the common web of average everyday life, in one word, as a somewhat inhuman specimen of our species, it exhibits him as thoroughly alike his fellow-men, both as regards quality of feeling and complexity of character.

These complex features of his character may be grouped by way of contrasts. Let us begin with the more seamy side.

While going over the Narrative, has not the frequent harshness or priggishness of tone jarred upon you? "Hence I date her Fall; here was the first false step: which God permitted indeed,

but not approved. . . . This was doubtless another false step. He that standeth, let him take heed lest he fall." This refers to Grace's answer that she believed her marrying Bennet was the will of God, and to her telling him there was no contract between her and Wesley (iv, v). Compare his epistle to Bennet, and admire the confident accent of it: "Oh that you would take Scripture and reason for your rule. . . ." Does it not look as if nothing in the heart of his fellow-mortals was hidden from the man who passes sentence so peremptorily over them? In fact, not only does he seem to behold things from the very standpoint of the Supreme Judge, but actually to stand on the same side with Him in his quarrel: "My Consent I cannot, dare not give. Nor, I fear, can God give you his blessing." This claiming to speak, in trivial matters, as the herald of God is the acme of dogmatic fanaticism.

Closely allied with this self-assertive language, the domineering spirit is unmistakable. "You expressed a willingness to be one of my helpers, and you objected to none of the rules whereby they act. . . . Both by the nature and rules of your office, you were engaged to do nothing of importance without consulting me. . . . Without ever consulting me, you solicited her to take a step of the last importance without my consent or knowledge. . . . Was it not much more wrong, considering you as an helper, who as such ought to do nothing without my advice? . . ." (xvi, 2, 4,

5, 12). Consequently, in his eyes, one of Grace's chief qualifications is that "she observes my rules, when I am absent as well as when I am present, and takes care that those about her observe them" (xxxi, 15). He could hardly make more fuss about the precepts of the Gospel than he does about these rules of his own human devising.

But he does not want only to be obeyed. Her telling him with all Faithfulness and Freedom if she thought anything amiss in his behaviour he would not quite so much relish, did she not know, "unlike most people, to reconcile the utmost plainness of speech with deep esteem and respect" (viii). He likes to be waited upon: "She was to me both a servant and friend . . . she provided everything I wanted." Indeed, he almost comically dwells upon this point. "She understands all I want to have done. She is remarkably neat in person, in clothes, in all things. She is nicely frugal, yet not sordid. She contrives everything for the best; makes everything go as far as it can go; foresees what is wanting and provides it in time. . . . She is a good workwoman, able to do the finest, ready to do the coarsest work." Thus might Molière's Harpagon weigh the utilitarian accomplishments of the young lady he intends to marry, and calculate she would bring little expense. This, on the other hand, might belong to the character of the same playwright's Would-be Invalid. "As a nurse (which my poor shattered, enfeebled Carcase now frequently stands in need of), she is careful to

the last degree, indefatigably patient, and inexpressibly tender. She is quick, cleanly, skilful, and understands my constitution better than most physicians" (xxxix, 15, 16). And, further, "She would, in great measure, either prevent or remove those bodily weaknesses and disorders which now increase fast upon me. By caring for me, she would free me from a thousand cares" (*ib.* 22). Regard for his own health is once more adduced somewhere else (xxxvi). Mind, his poor shattered, enfeebled carcase is just over forty-five years old, and will live to be eighty-eight. Again, there is something shockingly selfish in the manner he disposes of his children to be. If any, they should be wholly brought up at Kingswood (xxxix, 13). This reminds the reader of Mr. Quiller Couch's *Hetty Wesley*, where the daughters' dowry, virtue, and happiness are seen to be coldly sacrificed to the needs and advancement of the promising collegian. But the sprightly Christ Church undergraduate and Fellow of Lincoln has now lost his freshness by remaining single too long. To wind up the picture of him in this light, he is apt to be rough and harsh; his spirits require sweetening; he has to be convinced of what is true, and persuaded to what is right (xxxix, 23). In short, an old, peevish, grumbling, hard-to-please, dictatorial, dogmatical bachelor, who surely ought to remain single for ever.

Are you arguing with him, and do you wish to bring him round to your own views, have a care

not to urge them upon him. This would be the surest course at once to drive him just the opposite way. For he is stubborn almost to the point of perversity: "I particularly insist upon this: if I ever have a wife, she ought to be the most useful woman in the kingdom; not barely one who probably may be so (I could not be content to run such a hazard), but one that undeniably is so" (xxxix, 21).—But her riding behind you through England and Ireland has been deemed most improper.—"Another Circumstance which is absolutely necessary in such an Helper as I want. She is both willing and able to accompany me in all my journeys" (*ib.* 22).—But some probably will say she was your mistress before becoming your wife.—"Let them know withal I should never marry any woman till I had proof that she both could and would travel with me" (*ib.* 29).—But she is low-born.—"This weighs nothing with me. Besides, whoever I marry, I believe it will not be a gentlewoman. I despair of finding any such so qualified."—But she is your servant.—"I like her the better. . . . Indeed, I should scruple marrying any woman, who had not done so for some time" (*ib.* 27, 28, 29). Thus Charles's well-meaning objections each and all defeat their own ends.

And yet, this same man who, to such as would say Grace was his mistress before being his wife, coolly answers: "And let them say this. It would hurt just as much as a thousand things they have said before" (xxxix, 29), who not only despises

public opinion, but does not seem unwilling to bait it by riding rough-shod over its sense of propriety, acts in other places as if he was not altogether unmindful of it. Not only is his spontaneous regard for decorum extremely nice: "I thought it was not proper she and I should converse any more together" (xii); but, however loudly he may boast of marrying a servant in spite of everybody, are there not a few touches that look as if he was not unwilling to dress up the unpleasant fact? "I went into a service, where I was used more like a Child than a Servant," Grace is skilfully made to say (xx, 7). As for the Orphan House-Keeping, is it not the service of God? and who would be ashamed of it?

Many a passage seems to court a profane jester's witticism. This for instance: "On Sunday, 17, we continued conversing together till late at night, and she gave me all the assurances which words could give of the most intense and inviolable affection. The same she renewed every day, yea every hour when we were alone, unless when we were employed in prayer: which indeed took up a considerable part of the time we spent together" (xxi). Again, the scene on October 6, when "they sat weeping at each other," then Grace fell at Wesley's feet, and before she rose, Bennet fell on his knees too, and between them both Wesley knew not what to say or do (lvi), while most appropriate for the comical stage, calls up our remembrance of one of the most absurd

situations in Richardson's *Clarissa*, where the heroine and her friend are kneeling and admiringly crying at each other. Similarly, as coming from a man, who, if not guilty of disorderly affection, was most undoubtedly over head and ears in love, this apostrophe to a rival lover: "O that you would take Scripture and Reason for your rule, instead of blind and impetuous Passion" (xvi, 14) may be taken to betray an utter lack of humour.

And yet John Wesley's sense of humour was considerably above the average. His works and his life's incidents show that he was rather brimful of it. See the much misunderstood Preface to his English Dictionary: "N.B. The Author assures you, he thinks this is the best English Dictionary in the world. As incredible as it may appear, I must avow, that this Dictionary is not published to get money. . . . In compliance with the taste of the age, I add, that this little dictionary is not only the shortest and cheapest, but likewise, by many degrees, the most correct which is extant at this day. Many are the mistakes in all the other English Dictionaries which I have yet seen. Whereas, I can truly say, I know of none in this. And I conceive the reader will believe me; for if I had, I should not have left it there. Use, then, this help, till you find a better" (xiv, 233, 234). It would be difficult to set down with more mock solemnity statements which the writer knows to be preposterous, and does not expect the reader to take in earnest. On a particularly grave

subject the final argument of the *Thoughts on the Consecration of Churches and Burial-Grounds* also deserves quotation: "You say, this is consecrated ground, so many feet broad, and so many long. But pray how deep is the consecrated ground?—Deep! What does that signify?—O, a great deal. For if my grave be dug too deep, I may happen to get out of the consecrated ground. And who can tell what unhappy consequences may follow from this?" (*Works*, X, 510–511). The richest fund, however, is the *Journal*. In March, 1750, visiting a young woman in Bedlam, he is informed none of the preachers are to come there: "So we are forbid to go to Newgate for fear of making them wicked; and to Bedlam for fear of driving them mad" (ii, 174). On April 24, 1752, "We rode by a fine seat, the owner of which (not much above fourscore years old) says he desires only to live thirty years longer; ten to hunt, ten to get money, (having at present but twenty thousand pounds a year), and ten years to repent" (*ib.*, 257). But, indeed, we need not look for examples outside the narrative. Humour of the bitter ironical sort there is obviously in the following sentences: "They all then rode on contentedly to Leeds, to give me the meeting there, as well that I might have the pleasure of seeing the Bride, as that I might acknowledge my sin (those were my brother's expressions) before John Bennet and them all. But this I was not altogether ready to do. Neither did I apprehend she desired my company

any more" (MS., LV, LVI). There is still more of it in his lively description of the state of things at the Orphan-House after Charles had laid all the blame upon him: "Sister Proctor would leave the House immediately; John Whitford would preach with Mr. Wesley no more. Matthew Errington dreamed the House itself was all in flames (and most certainly it was). Another dreamer went a step farther, and saw Mr. Wesley in hell-fire. Jane Keith was peremptory: 'John Wesley is a child of the Devil,' coming pretty near John Bennet himself, whose repeated words were: 'If John Wesley is not damned, there is no God,'"—a climax which he no doubt enjoyed immensely, though personally and so seriously concerned. Habitual lack of humour, therefore, can hardly be laid to his charge.

Neither can obstinate self-confidence be predicated of him without qualifications. "My friends," he remarks, "have oftener accused me of being too stiff in my opinions, than too flexible. My enemies have accused me of both; and of everything besides" (x, 402-403). Inflexible as his opinions commonly were, it is true, few men have shown more distrust of their own judgment, more humility and docility to the guidance of others than Wesley did, especially in his younger years, not only with regard to his parents, but to William Law and then to the Moravians, to Spangenberg, even to Böhler, a man younger than himself. In September, 1738, he describes himself as "fearful

of trusting his own judgment" (viii, 380). Nor was this a mere scruple of the past. "Diffidence of ourselves," he writes in 1756, "is far from implying a diffidence of our cause: I distrust myself, not my argument" (ix, 195). In 1755, "being afraid of leaning to our own understanding," John and Charles apply for advice to the Rev. Samuel Walker, of Truro. "You seem, then, not to have the least conception of your own wanting any such thing. But whether you do or not, I feel I do. I am not *in memet totus teres atque rotundus*. I want more light, more strength, for my personal walking with God; and I know not but He may give it me through you. And, whether you do or no, I want more light and strength for guiding the flock committed to my charge. May not the Lord send this also by whom he will send? and by you as probably as by any other? It is not improbable that He may by you give me clearer light, either as to doctrine or discipline . . ." (xiii, 204). Snappishness this might be called, but not self-sufficiency. To a Querist in the *London Magazine*, he writes in 1765: "Before I conclude, permit me, sir, to give you one piece of advice. Be not so positive; especially with regard to things which are neither easy nor necessary to be determined. I ground this advice on my own experience. When I was young, I was sure of everything; in a few years, having been mistaken a thousand times, I was not half so sure of most things as I was before: at present I am hardly sure of

anything but what God has revealed to man" (xiii, 399). This lesson he teaches many people, among others a correspondent who was probably Samuel Furly: "In general, when I apprehend, 'Certainly this is a contradiction,' if I find other persons of equal sagacity with myself, of equal natural and acquired abilities, apprehend it is not; I immediately suspect my own judgment; and the more so, because I remember I have been many times full as sure as I am now, and yet afterwards I found myself mistaken" (xii, 241).

These are no empty sounds, hollow rhetorical professions, altruistic advice exclusively meant for the use of others. He verily acted upon his principles. "What I am ignorant of, I desire to learn," he once said and truly said (x, 340). Nothing affords plainer evidence of it than his continual readjusting of his doctrines, in their substance, if not always in their wording. Indeed, his adversaries, headed by Richard Hill, described his various tracts as "farrago double-distilled," out of which they professed to collect "above an hundred gross contradictions." He is, they contended, "the veriest weathercock that ever was; he has not wit enough to be fixed in anything, but is tossed to and fro continually; he is to this very moment so absolutely unsettled with regard to every fundamental doctrine of the gospel, that no two disputants in the Schools can be more opposite to each other than he is to himself"

(cf. *Wesley's Works*, X, 377, 415; 1772-3). In fact, he must not have been stubbornly attached to his opinions, who, after so fervently espousing in 1738 the Lutheran cause of justification by faith alone, as taught by the Moravians, could, thirty years later, describe this *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ* as *ampullas et sesquipedalia verba* (iv, 308; Dec. 1767), and write in the clamorously controverted Minutes of Conference for 1770: "As to merit itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid: we are rewarded according to our works, yea, because of our works. How does this differ from 'for the sake of our works'? And how differs this from *secundum merita operum*? which is no more than, 'as our works deserve.' Can you split this hair? I doubt I cannot" (viii, 337-338). Nor was he afraid of apparent self-contradiction, who, after thinking the Americans sought nothing but legal liberty and were in the right, as soon as he was convinced they sought independency and were in the wrong, republished Samuel Johnson's *Taxation no Tyranny*, (X, 452), as *A Calm Address to our American Colonies* (xi, 81-90).

In short, he was always ready to acknowledge any errors (cf. x, 344, 395, 398; xi, 428). Hampson, who was certainly not prejudiced in his favour, rightly praises the "general moderation of his controversial pieces" (III, 194), and might well have added his fairness in discussion. "If any one will convince me of my errors, I will heartily

thank him," he told an opponent (xiii, 239). His friends he would reproach with not helping him in this way. "Neither you nor John Jones has ever sent me your remarks upon that tract in the late volume of Sermons. You are not kind. Why will you not do all you can to make me wiser than I am . . ." (xii, 119; June, 1760). Again: "I seek two things in this world, truth and love" (*ib.* 467; June, 1755). Sometimes, it is to be granted, when taken at his word, he took exception to the criticism, and frowned at the critics. Like most of us, he disliked being lectured in an insolent, haughty, superior way. The manner had very much to do with it; if full of esteem and regard, as Grace Murray's was, it would be allowed to convey the most unsparing frankness of thought. The extent to which Wesley, especially in his later years, suffered some of his advisers, most of all Thomas Coke, to obtain ascendancy over him, is well known in the history of Methodism. "In a thousand instances," he himself rightly acknowledges, "I feel the want of more resolution and firmness of spirit. Yet, sometimes, that may appear irresolution which is not so" (xiii, 201). On the whole, it is clear he is quite sincere when preaching up the distrust of his own judgment, and even more so when adding, "Now, my brother, pray earnestly that God would show you *and me* what is right in this matter" (§ xvi, 12).

That he did not tolerate his authority to be slighted or set at nought, is beyond controversy.

Both his father's bombastic claims to an imperious undivided sway, as a condition of all sound government, and his mother's well-regulated family discipline had left a lasting trace on his mind. This autocratic spirit, and inborn genius for government, not inferior, in Macaulay's opinion, to that of Richelieu, many biographers have misconstrued and miscalled ambition. Nothing warrants our suspecting Wesley's truthfulness in his repeated assertions to the contrary. "I fear and shun, not desire authority of any kind. Only when God lays that burden upon me, I bear it, for his and the people's sake" (xii, 412); or "I exercise as little authority as possible, because I am afraid of people's depending upon me too much, and paying me more reverence than they ought" (xiii, 201). The case is well put in a letter of later date to a refractory preacher: "My dear Brother, you seem to me not to have well considered the Rules of a Helper, or the rise of Methodism. . . . After my return from Georgia, many were both awakened and converted to God. One, and another, and another of these desired to join with me as sons in the Gospel to be directed by me. I drew up a few plain rules, and permitted them to join me on these conditions. Whoever, therefore, violates these conditions, particularly that of being directed by me in the work, does, *ipso facto*, disjoin himself from me. . . . And what, if fifty of the present Preachers disjoined themselves! What should I lose thereby? Only a

great deal of labour and care, which I do not seek ; but endure, because no one else either can or will " (xiii, 139-140, 1780).

The charge of Popish tyranny, the Jesuits *perinde ac cadaver* might be hurled at him. In fact, he contended, there was nothing of the kind. He had never commanded people, under pain of damnation, to enter the pale of his Church, as one outside which there was no salvation. A Church he had not even presumed to found, only a confraternity, in close alliance with the Establishment and adherence to Anglican doctrines, as a supplementary means of mutual spiritual help and edification. "Soul and body make a man ; spirit and discipline a Christian" was one of his favourite maxims. It was the essential purpose of Methodism to stir up the spirit, then almost extinct in every denomination, and to bring together all Christians of good-will under the self-assumed yoke of a strict salutary discipline. Hence that close network of minute prescriptions and exercises that, from 5 a.m. to bedtime, from the beginning of the year to the end, encompassed the daily life of his associates, regulating their public and private prayers, their actions, their thoughts, their reading, their trades, their food, their dress, occasionally their marriages: "The person at Birr will not do," he intimates to a Limerick shopkeeper, Thomas Mason, "not only as she is far too young; little more than a child; but as she has only little, if any, Christian experience. You want

a woman of middle-age, well-tried, of good sense, and of deep experience. Such an one in every respect is Molly Pennington. . . ." (*Inquirer*, July 22, 1905, p. 459). This is but one more instance of his all-round paternal concern for his flock. Let us hope, as a match-maker, he was more successful in the case of others than in his own.

So no detail escaped his vigilance. He had adopted and enforced such means as experience proved the most likely to promote vital religion and loving faith in the hearts of his people. Whoever chose to be in society with him, he could no more dispense with keeping up those beneficent rules than his mother at Epworth would have dispensed with a single one of the punctilios which she held to be all-important for children's religious progress and for the moral welfare of her household. But with him nobody was compelled to stay: "I say, I have no right over your conscience, nor you over mine. Therefore both you and I must follow our own conscience. . . . Yet this is no persecution, were I to separate from our society those who practise what I believe to be contrary to the word, and destructive of the work of God. . . . No honest men who preside over any community will let the members of it do what they judge to be wrong, and hurtful to that community, without endeavouring to prevent it, at least, by mild, loving, friendly advice" (1756, xiii, 219, 224). This is exactly the purport of his telling Bennet: "If you had objected to any

of the rules whereby my helpers act, you might have continued at your own place, in friendship, though not in union with me" (MS. xvi, 2).

Only, there are several ways of being mild, loving, friendly. And John Wesley's sometimes was rather peculiar. Here one must bear in mind a common feature of at least all the male part of the Wesley family, and Emily into the bargain. They used to show their heart-felt interest in each other by addressing one another in the most roughly outspoken terms. Some of John's letters to Charles, and most of his letters to his wife, have already illustrated this distinctive habit. His correspondence with his elder brother Samuel was even more characteristic (cf. Overton, *J. W.*, 63, 64, 67, 101, 147). Charles has recorded of him that "he never could keep secrets since he was born. It is a gift which God has not given him" (Whitehead, 1793, II, 369). Neither could he ever veil a truth. This hereditary bent of mind had been reinforced by an early resolve "to use absolute openness and unreserve" with all he would converse with (March, 1738, I, 86). Is he not responsible for the souls of his fellow-men? thus to him it becomes a regular religious duty faithfully to deliver his own soul: "For some time I have been convinced it was my duty to tell you what was on my mind. I will do it with all plainness. You may answer or not, as you judge best. Many things I have observed in you which gave me pleasure; some which gave me concern. The

former I need not mention ; the latter I must, or I should not myself be clear before God" (1766, xii, 265). In the performance of this duty, he has no respect of persons. Nay, he is harder upon the great : "I can truly say, I neither fear nor desire anything from your Lordship. To speak a rough truth, I do not desire any intercourse with any persons of quality in England. I mean, for my own sake. They do me no good ; and I fear, I can do none to them. . . . At present, I do not want you ; but I really think you want me. For, have you a person in all England who speaks to your Lordship so plain and downright as I do ? who considers not the Peer, but the man ? not the Earl, but the immortal spirit ? who rarely commends, but often blames, and perhaps would do it oftener if you desired it ? who is jealous over you with a godly jealousy, lest you should be less a Christian by being a nobleman ?" (xii, 243). To no less a person than Lord Dartmouth he thus wrote in July, 1764 ; and thus he writes to all but those to whom he has no hope of doing good, who are not patient of reproof, and do not desire to hear what he thinks (*ib.*, 251) ; who take it as an affront, instead of as a favour. For "it is the surest mark of love" (xii, 331). Even where he has met with a rebuff, he nevertheless often ventures to try once more : "You will scarce know how to bear it from me, unless you lift up your heart to God. . . . Now, lift up your heart to God, or you will be angry at me. But I must go a

little further. . . ." (xiii, 141). It is love that at length turns the scale: "You know I love you. Ever since I knew you, I have neglected no way of showing it, that was in my power. . . . Therefore I am jealous over you, lest you should lose any of the things you have gained, and not receive a full reward. . . . I cannot be silent any longer without being wanting in affection" (*ib.*, 133, 141).

There may be softness in love, tenderness in affection. There are many ways of always telling the unadulterated truth: the manner of it may be calculated to gloss and smooth the roughness of the matter. Now Wesley would never put up with any such worldly prudence: disingenuousness he would rather call it. His plain thoughts he will always deliver in the plainest words. "I am thoroughly sensible," he declares in his Preface to the Collected Sermons, "these are not proposed in such a manner as some may expect. Nothing here appears in an elaborate, elegant, or oratorical dress. . . . I design plain truth for plain people" (Vol. V, 1-2). The same standard of taste is revealed in his strictures on French preachers: "I cannot admire French oratory; I despise it from my heart. Let those that please be in raptures at the pretty, elegant sentences of Massillon or Bourdaloue; but give me the plain, nervous style of Dr. South, Dr. Bates, or Mr. John Howe. And, for elegance, show me any French writer who exceeds Dr. Young, or Mr. Seed. Let who will admire the French frippery,

I am still for plain, sound English" (vi, 187). Nor was this sheer inability to do otherwise: indeed he *could* write, he said, as floridly and rhetorically as the admired Dr. Blair: his letters to Mary Pendarves—Cyrus's to Aspasia—are an evidence that he once did. But now he dares no more write in a *fine style* than wear a fine coat (*ib.*, 186, and Hampson, III, 157-163). The praises he bestows upon his brother's poetry in a Preface to a *Collection of Hymns, for the Use of the People called Methodists* are equally significant: here is no doggerel, no botches, nothing put in to patch up the rhyme, no feeble expletives; nothing turgid or bombastic, or low and creeping; no cant expressions, no words without meaning. "Those who impute this to us know not what they say. We talk common sense, whether they understand it or not, both in verse and prose, and use no word but in a fixed and determinate sense. Here are, allow me to say, both the purity, the strength, and the elegance of the English language, and, at the same time, the utmost simplicity and plainness, suited to every capacity" (xiv, 341). It is the sinewy severe nudity of the classical style at its best. To do without ornament and compliment, to retrench what is redundant, to be concise and clear, to use nothing but plain, intelligible terms "such as lie level with common understandings" (vi, 105), this was, and increasingly so, his ruling literary principle, his deliberate artistic standard. How far he carried it may best be seen in the

extracts he published from various writers, ruthlessly removing every word he deemed superfluous. One of his followers has wondered that he had never abridged St. John's Gospel.

But the very conciseness of this mode of writing makes it abrupt; its very forcibleness and directness is not unlike a blow; there is something hard in its compactness; its clear-cut outlines seem to be the sharp crystalline edges of a prism, where every detail shows in magnified roughness. Hence the peculiar quality of Wesley's style, which singularly adds to the pungency of his wit, to the intrinsic rudeness of his aggressive truth-telling. What he has to say he never conceals, wraps up, or dresses in "decent circumlocutions" (vii, 19) and pleasant phrases. Friends and foes alike he would serve with equal bluntness: "You suffered loss by being applauded. This revived and increased your natural vanity; which was the harder to be checked because of your constitutional stubbornness . . ." (to J. Trembath, September, 1755; xii, 251). "O John, pray for an advisable and teachable temper! By nature you are very far from it: You are stubborn and headstrong . . ." (to J. King, July 1775; *ib.*, 331). "Abstain from all controversy. Indeed you have not a talent for it. You have an honest heart, but not a clear head. Practical religion is your point" (to A. Coates, July, 1761; xii, 240-241). Even his favourite Sarah Ryan does not escape scot-free. "On what a pinnacle do you stand! . . .

You have no experience of these things ; no knowledge of the people ; no advantages of education ; not large natural abilities" (*ib.*, 217, November, 1757).

Sometimes he pleads want of leisure : "Dear Sir, I bless God that you are not disgusted at the great plainness with which I wrote. Indeed I know not but it might be termed roughness ; which was owing partly to the pressure of mind I then felt, and partly to my being straitened for time ; otherwise I might have found softer expressions" (xii, 249). People have talked largely of his dogmaticalness, and here is the apology he offers to the Rev. Henry Venn : "My dogmaticalness is neither more nor less than a custom of coming to the point at once, and telling my mind flat and plain, without any preface or ceremony. I could indeed premise something of my own imbecility, littleness of judgment, and the like ; but, first, I have no time to lose, I must dispatch the matter as soon as possible. Secondly, I do not think it frank or ingenuous. I think these prefaces are mere artifice" (June, 1765, xii ; 239). The beginning of the same letter evinces even more clear-sighted self-knowledge : "Having at length a few hours to spare, I sit down to answer your last, which was particularly acceptable to me, because it was wrote with so great openness. I shall write with the same. And herein you and I are just fit to converse together, because we both like to speak blunt and plain,

without going a great way round about" (*ib.*, 238). Shall we now quarrel with his conclusion: "I have no turn at all for panegyric; I have never accustomed myself to it" (*xi*, 341).

Thus, the very quality of his diction, like a magnifying glass, enhanced and made more conspicuous to every eye what was already with him a deliberate principle of action resting on religious grounds, superadded to a strong inherited natural bias. The whole of which has been, many times, not surprisingly mistaken for irrepressible sourness of temper, while it was only accidentally so. For instance, what Wesley suffered from in August, 1748, it must be noticed, was bilious disorder; and during the next few years he was being slowly undermined by the morbid agencies that came to a crisis in November, 1753. In no other period of his life, with the possible exception of that immediately following his so-called conversion in May, 1738, was his disposition fiercer, more contentious and intractable, in marked contrast with the beaming serenity and mellowed loving-kindness of his old age. But his pointed way of writing never deserted him: a habit of thought and utterance, it is not to be construed into a habit of heart.

Had not John Hampson (whose father left the Connexion in 1784 because he had not been included among the "legal hundred" who were to constitute the Methodist Preachers' Conference) been so strongly prejudiced against Wesley, one

would indeed wonder at this cool statement of his: "From the munificence of Mr. Wesley, it might be supposed that he was a man of much softness and sensibility. And yet this does not appear to have been the case. His charities rather seem to have been the result of a sense of duty, than of any peculiar tenderness of nature. He had no attachments, so far as we have been able to discover, that partook of the genius of friendship" (III, 199). It is more amazing to find no less a sage than Coleridge, in his *Notes on Southey's Life of Wesley*, echo, in his different language, the very same condemnation: "The pervading I, I, I, I . . . the first pronoun personal in all its cases, but only in the singular number, ἡμεῖς being οἱ ἀμφ' ἐμε, —these were Wesley,—Boy Wesley, Youth Wesley, Young Man, Man, Elder, Patriarch Wesley . . . in short, my, my, my-self, in a series of disguises and self-delusions. Such is the sum of Southey's statement: and are these compatible with the same Wesley at the same time assuredly loving God with *all* his heart, with *all* his soul, and with *all* his strength? If it were right and possible for a man to love himself in God,—yet can he love God in himself, otherwise than by making his-self his God?" (ed. 1858, I, 130, 132, 243–244). Miss Wedgwood, who likewise charges Wesley with want of feeling, at least describes him as regardless of self, as well as of any other personality (*E. R.*, 162).

But this picture of a "hard, logical, intense,"

yet unfeeling apostle, "fully absorbed by the Society," whose "love diffused over so large a surface had hardly any points of concentration," destitute of tenderness, profoundly cool, and completely detached from all personal feeling (*E. R.*, 162, 218, 245, 248) as little tallies with the total tenor of his life as the unqualified imputation of "rooted ambition, restless appetite of power and primacy, with a vindictive spirit breaking out into slanders against those who interfered with his ruling passion" (Coleridge, 243). Alexander Knox, one of the few men, not themselves Methodists, who have had an intimate acquaintance with Wesley, and one whose mental acumen has in this instance proved far superior to Coleridge's, besides his own evidence of fact "that no human being was more thoroughly exempt from all those frailties" (*Remarks*, 306), pointed out, as early as 1821, how these "tasteless allegations of ambition and vanity," and restless love of power, first circulated by Hampson, excluded the impassivity with which Wesley was taxed at the same time: "Why will they not see that the virtues which they ascribe to him are incompatible with the vices which they seem to take a perverse pleasure in imputing?" Nothing more inconsistent with ambitious aims and selfish purposes than unruffled peace of mind (*ib.*, 309; to Jebb, II, 453-454). This view has been generally endorsed by subsequent writers. But on Wesley's supposed hard-heartedness, Knox again brought diametrically

opposite evidence ; which has been improved upon by the late Dr. Rigg in his *Living Wesley*, and is wonderfully borne out by the information we now possess as to Wesley's love affairs, entirely unknown to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, particularly by the account of his attachment to Grace Murray.

In flat contradiction to Hampson, Knox dwells on Wesley's impressible nature. It inclined him, he goes on after quoting a message from him to "his dear Sally Knox", "to conceive such attachments, and the childlike innocence of his heart disposed him to express them with the most amiable simplicity. The gaiety of his nature was so undiminished in its substance, while it was divinely disciplined in its movements, that, to the latest hour of his life, there was nothing innocently pleasant with which he was not pleased, and nothing naturally lovely, which, in its due proportion, he was not ready to love" (*Remarks*, III, 478-479). There are delightful stories of his kindness to children ; and we have it, on his niece's authority, that "he always showed peculiar sympathy to young persons in love" (Telford, *J. W.*, 359-360). There are records of assistants melting into tears at the geniality with which he forgave their faults (*Homes*, etc., 28-29). Not only did he enforce the duty of relieving the poor, but that of not grieving them, and giving them at least soft words, if nothing else ; and "it was his habit to

raise his hat to any poor person who thanked him for his kindness" (*Works*, XIII, 516; Hurst, III, 1100). Preachers he required to be merciful to their beasts; and the Minutes of Conference dispose that every one shall "see with his own eyes his horse rubbed, fed, and bedded" (viii, 318). Nay, a sermon of his promises animals their fair share in the General Deliverance: the whole brute creation shall be, at the last day, restored to a state of exalted happiness (vi, 249). "It is a curious fact, Tyerman shrewdly observes, but attentive readers of Wesley's *Journal* will easily perceive, that, as Wesley grew older, he took far more interest in visiting scenes of beauty and historic buildings, than he did in the first part of his illustrious career. How to account for this, we know not; but so it was" (III, 475). The fact is, Wesley's innocent delight in life developed more and more as he advanced in age and cast off the precise austerity of his Oxford asceticism, the overdone Puritan rigour that had first accompanied his "conversion," and the shallow catch-words that irreconcilably oppose the world to God, or divorce grace from nature. Did he not, to the scandal of his more bigoted followers, actually republish Henry Brooke's novel, the *Fool of Quality*, and, in the hallowed pages of the *Arminian Magazine*, reprint Prior's poem, *Henry and Emma*? (xiii, 421-422; xiv, 285). By such facts as these one of Wesley's most recent biographers has been carried the length

of associating his name with those of the leaders of sentimental literature, Goldsmith, Gray, Young, Thomson, Richardson, and Rousseau ; and representing him as a "man of feeling" (C. T., Winchester, 283-287).

As a matter of fact, though long eclipsed, partly by absence of documents, partly by biographers' over-scrupulous silence, the emotional aspect of Wesley's character cannot be ignored any longer. Attention had already been drawn to it by Knox : "Mr. Southey has doubtless observed that the greatest part of Mr. Wesley's published letters are addressed to female correspondents, and I think he will agree with me, that the characteristic openness which marks all Mr. Wesley's letters, and makes them be felt as a disclosure of his very mind and heart, is never more conspicuous than when he is writing to his friends of the female sex. It is certain that Mr. Wesley had a predilection for the female character ; partly because he had a mind ever alive to amiability, and partly from his generally finding in females a quicker and fuller responsiveness to his own ideas of interior piety and affectionate devotion. To his female correspondents, therefore (as it strikes me), he writes with peculiar effluence of thought and frankness of communication. He, in fact, unbosoms himself on every topic which occurs to him, as to kindred spirits, in whose sympathies he confided, and from whose re-communications he hoped for additional light on those internal concerns which

were ever uppermost in his mind and nearest to his heart. . . . To interesting females especially this affection continually showed itself (II, 295 ; *Remains*, III, 478-479).

John's early education at Epworth, it is to be remembered, had taken place under the almost exclusive control of his mother, and in the exclusive company of his sisters, all of them accomplished women. His first contact with unmitigated masculine roughness and coarseness, first at Charterhouse School then at Oxford University, seems to have at once resulted in distinct reaction and in more decided attraction towards feminine refinement. Hence, about 1725, his platonic admiration for *Varanese*, the eldest daughter of the Rev. Lionel Kirkham. Hence his romantic correspondence with Alexander Pendarves's widow, the fascinating daughter of Bernard Granville, a few years later remarried to Dean Delany. Hence his easy falling, during his mission to Georgia, into the toils of the bewitching, if rather disingenuous, Sophy Hopkey. His was a very inflammable heart indeed. When read in this light, his Sermons are full of pathetic passages, which sound almost like autobiography, about the frequent duty to pluck out a right eye, to cut off a right hand, to part with a foolish desire, with an inordinate affection, or with the object of it—a separation without which it can never be extinguished (vi, 108). Preaching on Friendship with the World, he discusses the case of one about to

marry a person who is not religious: "But she is a beautiful creature. She is extremely agreeable, and, I think, will make me a lovely companion.—This is a snare indeed! Perhaps one of the greatest that human nature is liable to. This is such a temptation as no power of man is able to overcome. Nothing less than the mighty power of God can make a way for you to escape from it. And this can work a complete deliverance: His grace is sufficient for you. But not unless you are a worker together with Him; not unless you deny yourself, and take up your cross. And what you do, you must do at once! Nothing can be done by degrees. Whatever you do in this important case must be done at one stroke. If it be done at all, you must at once cut off the right hand, and cast it from you! Here is no time for conferring with flesh and blood. At once, conquer or perish!" (*ib.*, 460). Does it not seem as if, after the lapse of many years, his heart was still throbbing and bleeding with his Savannah experience? This experience again permeates his admonition as to the danger to converse familiarly with women that know not God, "as they are generally more insinuating than men, and have far greater power of persuasion, particularly if they are agreeable in their persons, or pleasing in their conversation. You must be more than man if you can converse with such and not suffer any loss. If you do not feel any foolish or unholy desire (and who can promise

that you shall not?), yet it is scarce possible that you should not feel more or less of an improper softness, which will make you less willing and less able to persist in that habit of denying yourself, and taking up your cross daily, which constitute the character of a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (*ib.*, 471).

In the words of Dr. Rigg, "he was naturally a woman-worshipper.¹ . . . He was susceptible, almost to weakness, in presence of female attractions; but he was always delicate and honourable in his feelings and conduct" (L. W., 62-63, 81). In the course of his self-examination with regard to G. Murray, it is true, he longs for "a continual defence against unholy desires, and inordinate affections, which I never did entirely conquer, for six Months together, before my intercourse with her" (MS. xxxi, 22). This is of the nature of a confession, but of a confession by a very exacting judge of self, dealing only with the internal state, with the most secret impulses of his soul, not necessarily with any external acts at all. The implications are not those we might look for, had we to do with a man of the world. In fact, the only approach to a definite accusation of this kind that has ever been levelled at him is to be found in a vile pamphlet against the Oxford Methodists, where he is not even mentioned by name: "'Tis certain that their Founder took formerly no small

¹ "A Squire of Dames" he even calls him in another place.

liberty in indulging his appetites" suggests the anonymous informer of Fog's *Journal*, who next describes them as ready to imitate Origenes (December 9, 1732, p. 2). None of the indelicate libels on Methodism produce more than vague general charges of immorality, most of them bad jokes on the doctrine of the New Birth, or on what was supposed to take place in band-meetings and love-feasts. It is hardly conceivable that, if they had ever been able to lay hold of any positive misdeed, Wesley's keen unscrupulous adversaries would have failed to saddle him with it.

Thus, while no blot on his character, "his extreme natural susceptibility to whatever was graceful and amiable in women, especially if united to mental vigour and moral excellence" (Rigg, 62-63), is a feature that must not by any means be left any longer out of reckoning, no more than his persistent fondness for feminine intercourse. "I should converse far more sparingly with them. Perhaps not in private with any young women at all, at least not with any member of our own Societies" (MS. xxxi, 24): in the height of his love for Grace Murray, whose jealous propensities he is aware of, this is the utmost he can promise her.

The working of his imagination in such cases is worth noticing, "I will tell you how it was with me," he relates in a short tract upon marriage. "Though I do not know I was ever low-spirited (my spirits being always the same, whether in

sickness or in health), yet I was often uneasy. Even in vigorous health, in plenty, and in the midst of my friends, I wanted something; I was not satisfied. I looked about for happiness, but could not find it. Then I thought, 'O, if I had but such a person with me, I should surely be happy.' I mused with myself, 'How lovely is her look! How agreeably she talks!' I thought of Sappho's words:—

Bless'd as the immortal gods is he,
The youth that fondly sits by thee;
And hears and sees thee all the while
Softly speak and sweetly smile.

Surely this is the very thing I want; and could I attain it, I should then no more be solitary! . . . Therefore, with her I can be happy; without her I never can" (xi, 464). This is what Stendhal would have called *crystallizing*, i.e. the mind's fondly dwelling on its object, endowing it with more and more perfection, and growing more and more in love with it—as the magic of frost transmutes into dazzling diamond the barest twig to which it clings. The same process may be traced in our manuscript. "The more we conversed together, the more I loved her (ix). . . . The more I knew her, the more I loved her (xxi). . . . Every hour gave me fresh proof of her usefulness on the one hand, and her affection on the other" (xviii). He writes down an account of the more remarkable passages of her life: "This endeared her to me more than before" (xix). The more narrowly he

observes her and the more frequently he enumerates her gifts and ponders over them, the more enthusiastic he grows. Objections only make her dearer to him: "I plainly perceived Jealousy and Envy were the real ground of most of these accusations; and idle, senseless Prejudice, of the rest; Offence taken, but not given. So that, after all, her character appeared untouched, and for anything they could prove, she had done all things well" (xxii). That creative imagination was here at work quite as much as sober insight plainly appears from the praises with which he loads her in the fervour of his passion, and which he finds himself compelled to recall on second thoughts and to erase on a second reading. Nothing but his heated fancy had endowed her with knowledge of books, with deadness to the desire of the eyes and the pride of life; with exemplary chastity, modesty, temperance without affectation; with teachableness and long-suffering; with constantly attending preaching at 5 a.m.; with being exceedingly beloved by all. His regard for truth induces him to recant accordingly (xxxi, 17-20).

Mark also how readily his quick emotional moods indulge in hyperboles: "I never yet heard or read of any woman so owned of God. . . . Show me the woman . . . who has already done so much good. . . . I will say more: Show me one in all the English annals whom God has employed in so high a degree—I might say, in all the history of the Church, from the Death of Our Lord to this

day. This is no Hyperbole, but plain demonstrable fact" (*ib.*, 21). Yet he is sensible enough not to attempt the demonstration, and to suppress the whole tirade in a cooler moment.

The impulsive tendency to exaggerate¹ is not confined to the expression of his love. It often recurs when he is thinking of himself: "You were scarce out of my house when . . . you solicited her to take a step of the last importance. . . . You, whom I had trusted in all things, thus betrayed your trust. . . . You, to whom I had done no wrong, wronged me, and that in an uncommon manner" (xvi, 5). Again, "the soliciting her without the consent of a Father, and more than a Father . . . was this consistent either with gratitude or friendship? nay, with common justice or humanity?" (*ib.*, 13). "I could not conceive that mine was an inordinate affection, unless it was such an inordinate affection as never was before from the beginning of the world" (xxxvi). "If these things are so, hardly has such a case been from the beginning of the world!" (lvii.) Under the same head Knox would probably have entered Wesley's sensitive union to his own Society, "not, I was persuaded, because it was *his own* Society, but because he overrated its value, and had an extravagant notion of its providential destination" (*Remarks*, 314). Notion, he rightly says. For all

¹ From the standard edition of the *Journal*, I, 523, we now learn that, even in his youth, Wesley was liable to such exaggeration, which he entered in his Diary as "lying."

this is no trick of style. Wesley's literary probity would never have allowed it to pass; it is no overdrawn stroke of an unskilful writer: few men have ever handled a pen with more masterly control. He is, every time, saying exactly what he is meaning. The words are not out of proportion to the idea they convey; the idea it is that is out of proportion to the facts, because the feeling is too intense, and the emotional shock has been too impetuous. It may take considerable time before the man recovers complete self-control.

The same disposition shows in the explosive suddenness of many actions or utterances of his: "I told her, sliding into it I know not how, 'If ever I marry, I think you will be the person'" (§ ii). All his behaviour displays kindred symptoms. With equal promptitude and intensity is his pity excited: "O how God has fed thee with bread of adversity and water of affliction!" he cannot refrain from exclaiming at the mere thought of the trials he is going to retrace. As a lover, he is easily accessible to indulgence: "One cannot excuse her behaviour in all this time. . . . But those who know human nature will pity her much; at least as much as they will blame her" (§ vi). And how triumphantly he answers every one's accusations against her! This was accidentally true; this was not true; this was never done at all (§ xxii). Transparent is his sincerity in disowning any motion of revengeful jealousy: he was with Bennet a few weeks after the marriage,

and barely two months later addressed him as his affectionate brother in an affectionate letter (Fitchett, 464). And yet, how impatient of rivalry his love was at bottom! Was it not the reason why, long before courting Grace himself, he took alarm at the mere rumour that she was engaged to John Brydon, spoke to her at once, and advised her to go into the country without letting the young man know where she went? (§ xx, 42.) Is there not much of the same desire to rule supreme over her heart in the strange reasonings with which he finally satisfies himself that facts do not warrant the supposition she loved Bennet best, and that her real motive in marrying him was "to preserve one she tenderly loved from ruin" (§ li). And he proceeds to analyse the probable trend of her feelings: "Above all, her love to me, together with the remembrance of many things which had passed between us, would sometimes return, quash all her joy, and be as a sword piercing her heart." Obviously, a powerful solace to himself. Thus does John Wesley exhibit all the features of the passionate wooer.

Dr. Rigg justifies his dwelling upon Cyrus's letters to Aspasia—Wesley's to Mary Pendarves—"not merely because of the curious interest which attaches to the letters, but because it reveals a background of natural character, which enables us to see in a much truer light the matured and in good part transformed Wesley of later years." To what extent he was really transformed, almost

a quarter of a century later, the account of his love for Grace Murray will enable every reader to appreciate. The same apology, anyhow, holds good of it. It might be argued, furthermore, that these love episodes remarkably help us to understand the very inwardness of his religious activity.

While he describes Wesley as a man of feeling, Mr. Winchester suggests that one of the causes of his vast influence possibly was this affinity with the growing spirit of his time. No doubt the appeal from analytic processes of thought to immediate intuition, from mechanical compliance with an abstract "fitness of things" to a loving intercourse of the will with a living personal Being, from cold universal reason to fiery individual experience, almost adequately sums up the intellectual message of that Evangelical revival, in which Methodism stood as the earliest organized form and the most effectual instrument. It is primarily a religious revolution. It is a reaction, of thoroughly British growth, against that free-thinking deistic rationalism which had conspicuously flourished in England, and pervaded the body and the heads of the Church quite as much as the brains of philosophers. At the same time, it is nevertheless part and parcel of a more general widespread European culture movement, in which literature is fundamentally concerned. It implies a decided departure from classical standards. Wesley's prose writings, indeed, will always bear the Addisonian stamp, and hail from the age of

Queen Anne. But, as regards actually preached sermons, the stiff moral essays that used to be read in most pulpits give place to impassioned extemporizing, tuned up to the tumultuous moods of multitudinous open-air audiences. And the two brothers' Poems, however little their artistic value, are an unmistakable contribution to popular sacred song: the smooth, correct, regular heroic couplet of Pope and his school is superseded by endlessly varied combinations of metre and stanzas; lines freely encroach upon each other; verse and language strive to picture the manifold impulses of the soul, the vehement rush of religious emotions. Cowper, it must be remembered, came under the influence of Methodism. Both in this more refined fashionable garb, and in the more uncouth form of the Society hymn-books, a new kind of poetry here rises before us, instinct with a more ardent flame, alive to every pulse of individual sensibility: the truly lyrical poetry. To this degree, Methodism did perhaps pave the way for romanticism in literature. To a high degree, it was spiritual romanticism, or lyrical religion.

As a counterpart to the emotional bent of his natural affections, it is noticeable, in this respect, how fond Wesley was of sensational spirituality. Of course, in his teaching, as well as in his proceedings, there was much of a higher and healthier kind, much of substantial piety and energetic moral conformity to the will of God. Yet he laid incredible weight by all manner of out-of-the-

way occurrences, which chiefly appealed to the nerves; the very strangeness (if not scarcity) of which and their startling effects upon the recipients were taken for sufficient tokens that they came from God and conveyed some supernatural message. If so, the reality and the quality of men's religion are not so much to be measured by practical godliness, as by the frequency and amplitude of emotional vibrations. Wesley, indeed, always denied the consequence, and contended that in any case the genuineness of conversion is to be shown by living fruits. Meanwhile, as a matter of fact, what value he attached to religious excitement may be concluded from the sort of stuff he industriously piled up, and sedulously encouraged in the *Biographies of Methodist Preachers*, edited by himself, in his *Arminian Magazine*, a sample and foretaste of which may be enjoyed in his account of Grace Murray. Whether she only told him what she knew would interest him, or he only retained what he thought to be "the most remarkable passages of her life," here we have a selection according to his liking. Now, among numerous instances of unquestionable piety and devotion to the work of God and to the welfare of men, it is impossible not to be struck by the enormous proportion of simply weird incidents. They have already been pointed out above, in connection with Grace Murray's peculiar state of nerves, in the early days of itinerant preaching, a state by no means uncommon throughout gin-

drinking cities and extensively pauperized industrial centres. Here we have these incidents endorsed, as it were, by Wesley, and witnessing to his own ideal. Himself also we find equally intent upon forebodings, omens, and dreams, as means to ascertain and carry out providential purposes, asking God that, if He saw good, He would show what would be the end of these things, in dreams or visions of the night (xl), or opening at random his Book of Common Prayer for Bible oracles (xxxviii), as he had learnt to do from the Moravians on his voyage to Georgia. How vague the information thus obtained was, how remote from the actual events, may be judged from both cases. Any adversity might cause the Psalmist to cry to God for deliverance in the very same terms; and Grace's marrying John Bennet certainly had little to do with capital sentence. Again, at Hineley Hill, he prays "God would give us a token that all these things should work together for good" (xxxv). God did: He wrote pardon upon the heart of one who had cried with a bitter and loud cry.

Here is one of the few instances where Wesley's phraseology is not transparently clear. What does he mean by "a token of God"? What does he mean by God's writing pardon upon a heart? What concrete realities lie under these nebulous phrases? Let us look at the *Journal* for enlightening particulars. On Saturday, June 17, 1749, John has just been preaching at Athlone, in Ireland. "I was soon called back by one crying

out: 'My God! my God! thou hast forgotten me.' Having spoken this, she sunk to the earth. We called upon God in her behalf. The cries both of her and of several others, mourning after God, redoubled. But we continued wrestling with God in prayer, till he gave us an answer of peace" (II, 140). This is slightly more graphic. Grace Murray's account will supply us with parallel instances. The night Mr. Wesley preached his last sermon at Fetter Lane, before his return to Bristol, she relates, "As I stepped off the bench in order to go home, suddenly I was struck down, and fell to the ground. I felt as if my heart was bound round with an iron girdle. I knew myself to be a lost damned sinner . . ." (§ xx, 16). The next day, just as Mr. Wesley began his sermon at Pankridge, I was taken in the same manner (17). Then, a week later, "all things became new . . ." (18). Then, one day, while bed-making, "the power of God fell upon me, and I cried out . . . and dropped down to the ground" (21). "The Spirit of God withdrew from me, and I dropped down, and lost my senses" (37). Circumstances much alike must be understood by "people being convinced of sin, receiving remission of sins, or a sense of the pardoning love of God" (38, 40, 44), by "God breaking all our hearts to pieces," or "working among the people in a surprising manner" (40, 45), by "their seldom meeting or parting without a blessing" and "being overpowered with the presence of God" (42, 47). Compare also the

wonderful excitement at the Newcastle Orphan-House, "when the Spirit of Prayer was over them," and they were "all filled with consolation" (70-71, 73).

By some or all of these marks is a token of God identified. It is some unusual physical agitation or bodily disorder, some organic upheaval which is taken to be the palpable evidence of the divine presence and action. It is God's working in the soul made manifest by some startling instantaneous unmistakable stroke. It is grace materialized, for the better assurance of somewhat gross believers, and for the more effective conviction of unbelievers. This sort of spiritual fermentation had early bubbled up under Wesley's preaching. The first well-ascertained instance of it seems to have occurred at the Minories, in January, 1739, when "a well-dressed, middle-aged woman suddenly cried out as in the agonies of death. She continued so to do for some time, with all the signs of the sharpest anguish of spirit" (I, 172). But a subsequent reference apparently implies that, on New Year's Day, similar scenes had graced the love-feast in Fetter Lane, when, about three in the morning, about sixty of the brethren continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon them, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. "As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of His Majesty, we broke out with one

voice, 'We praise thee, O God ; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord'" (I, 170, 204). The most favoured seat of these performances on a large scale was, however, Bristol, where the French Prophets had, for some time, exhibited corresponding anomalies. Here, almost at every step, we meet with people "dropping down on every side as thunderstruck, breaking out into strong cries and tears, their bones shaking and great drops of sweat running down their faces, changing colour, and beating themselves against the ground, as raving mad ; by turns constrained to roar for the disquietness of their heart, calling upon God as out of the belly of hell, next bursting forth into praise, overwhelmed with joy and love" (I, 187, 188, 190-191).

John Cennick, who, it is true, on account of the nascent Calvinistic controversy, had rather bitterly separated from Wesley ten years before writing this, distinctly makes him responsible for the whole matter, and connects the bodily agitations with one of Wesley's favourite doctrines : "It was April 17, 1739, that people began to fall into fits under the discourses, especially as Mr. Wesley began to preach perfection, and to speak terribly out of the Law. . . . At first no one knew what to say, but it was soon called the pangs of the New Birth, the work of the Holy Ghost, the bruising of the serpent's head, casting out the old man, etc. ; but some were offended, and entirely left the Societies when they saw Mr. Wesley encourage it.

I often doubted if it was not of the enemy when I saw it, and disputed with Mr. Wesley for calling it the work of God ; but he was strengthened in his opinion after he had wrote about it to Mr. Erskine in Scotland (who at that time had made a great stir among the religious Scots) and had received a favourable answer. And frequently, when none were agitated in the meetings, he prayed, Lord, where are Thy tokens and signs, &c. &c. I don't remember ever to have seen it otherwise than that on his so praying several men were seized and screamed out" (*Moravian Messenger*, 1906, pp. 108-109). This fully agrees with the Rev. Josiah Tucker's evidence in June, 1739: he has been "credibly informed that, at the Societies in Bristol, Mr. Westley has prayed, That God would visibly manifest some Token of His favour. And presently after that, there were persons that screamed out and put their bodies into violent agitations and distortions, seeming all over convulsed" (*Political State*, LVII, 514 note).

As a matter of fact, Cennick, who had had to stand among such raging converts, and who proceeds to give the most fearful description of their symptoms, "can't be persuaded but that, though there might be some who affected this, there was something supernatural. . . . In the beginning, when Mr. W. prayed for them, they were recovered, sang hymns, and declared before all they had received the Holy Ghost. . . . But oftentimes the same persons were seized and grew intolerable,

and though they prayed with them whole nights, they were rather worse and worse." Three women confessed they were demoniacs. One "could not read, and yet would answer at any time if persons talked to her in Latin or Greek. They could tell who was coming into the house, though they were held down upon the floor. They said who would be seized next; what was doing in other places, &c. If any one had a Bible with them, though ever so artfully concealed, they knew it, and would not suffer such an one to touch them. . . ." (M. M., 109-110).

Wesley's own final opinion is somewhat difficult to ascertain. At first he simply exulted in this paradisaic pandemonium: "So many living witnesses hath God given that his hand is still 'stretched out to heal,' and that, 'signs and wonders are even now wrought by his holy child Jesus'" (i, 187). To his brother Samuel's objections on May 10, 1739, he appeals to these as incontrovertible facts. A strange sort of dissimulation it is, when the breath is stopped and the pulse hardly discernible! (I, 260.) Nor will he have them accounted for in any natural way. At Newcastle he insists on it that, "till thus affected, all of them were persons in perfect health, and had not been subject to fits of any kind" (i, 415). In Bristol Newgate prison, "a physician, who was much afraid there might be fraud or imposture in the case . . . could hardly believe his own eyes and ears. He went and stood close and observed

every symptom. . . . He then knew not what to think, being clearly convinced it was not fraud, nor yet any natural disorder. But when both her soul and body were healed in a moment, he acknowledged the finger of God" (I, 189). "I have seen many hysterical and many epileptic fits; but none of them were like these, in many respects," he is careful to remark in another place (204). The next day, "we met at Fetter-lane, to humble ourselves before God, and own He had justly withdrawn His Spirit from us, for our manifold unfaithfulness. We acknowledged our having grieved him . . . above all by blaspheming his work among us, imputing it either to nature, to the force of imagination and animal spirits, or even to the delusion of the devil. In that hour we found God with us as at the first. Some fell prostrate upon the ground. Others burst out, as with one consent, into loud praise and thanksgiving. And many openly testified, there had been no such day as this since January the 1st preceding" (*ib.*, 204).

Could anything more forcibly prove that these manifestations were not always unwished for, nor altogether unprovoked? Conversely, did not Charles succeed in stopping them, as soon as he realized that, while many at first had been truly "struck down, both soul and body, into the depth of distress, their *outward affections* were easy to be imitated"? A girl of twelve years old "confessed that her fits and cryings (above thirty of them) were all feigned, that Mr. Wesley might take

notice of her." Many other counterfeits were detected. And Charles congratulated himself on having removed this stumbling block out of the way: "I am more and more convinced it was a device of Satan to stop the course of the Gospel. Since I have preached it, if I can discern anything, it never had greater success than at this time. Yet we have no fits among us, and I have done nothing to prevent them, only declared that I do not think the better of any one for crying out or interrupting my work" (C. W., I, 247, 314, 316).

The havoc made by the French Prophets, meanwhile, had helped not a little in bringing John round to more balanced views. Barely a month after doing penance for his unbelief, he was telling his audience: "They were not to judge of the spirit whereby any one spoke, either by appearances, or by common report, or by their own inward feelings: No, nor by any dreams, visions, or revelations, supposed to be made to their souls: any more than by their tears, or any involuntary effects wrought upon their bodies. I warned them, all these were, in themselves, of a doubtful, disputable nature; they might be from God, and they might not . . ." (I, 206). He is alarmed at a spirit of enthusiasm "breaking upon many who charged their own imaginations on the will of God, and that not written, but impressed on their hearts. If these impressions be received as the rule of action, instead of the written word, I know nothing so wicked or absurd but we may fall into and that

without remedy" (p. 318, July 13, 1741). By enthusiasm, "thinking men mean a sort of religious madness: a *false imagination* of being inspired by God; and by an *enthusiast* one that *fancies* himself under the influence of the Holy Ghost, when, in fact, he is not" (viii, 106). His sermon on the *Witness of the Spirit*, in the first place, cautions us against the danger we are in to run into all the wildness of enthusiasm (v, 123). "Let us walk warily," he even remonstrates to his brother in October, 1753, "I have much constitutional enthusiasm; and you have much more" (xii, 115). His *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* once more eloquently sounds this note: "Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm. O keep at the utmost distance from it! Give no place to a heated imagination! Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil" (xi, 429).

At Newcastle, in March, 1743, facts have come under his notice which strike him as essentially different from those he had observed before: "These symptoms I can no more impute to any natural cause, than to the Spirit of God." It is "Satan tearing them . . . to discredit the work of God" (I, 415). Thus, after a while, he divides them into three classes, which he distinguishes "by the circumstances that precede, accompany, and follow" (viii, 454). Some he declares, in his answer

to the Rev. Mr. Church, to be wholly natural; others are mixed, both the disorder and the removal being partly natural and partly not (*ib.*, 410-411). Of the latter, again, he ascribes a part to the devil (ix, 144), for "demoniacs will remain as long as Satan is the God of this world" (viii, 454-455). But many of the cures, he still holds, have been wrought by the supernatural power of God (*ib.*, 457). "The question between us turns chiefly, if not wholly, on matter of fact. You deny that God does now work these effects: at least, that He works them in this manner. I affirm both, because I have heard these things with my own ears, and have seen them with my eyes. I have seen (as far as a thing of this kind can be seen) very many persons changed in a moment from the spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the spirit of love, joy, and peace; and from sinful desire, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. . . . And that such a change was then wrought appears (not from their shedding tears only, or falling into fits, or crying out: These are not the fruits, as you seem to suppose, whereby I judge, but from the whole tenour of their life, till then many ways wicked; from that time, holy, just, and good" (I, 195). That is the worst form of enthusiasm which thinks to attain the end without the means. "In no part do I lay down those agitations or convulsions as any marks of the new birth at all" (xii, 244). As to the extraordinary circumstances that attend this con-

viction, they are "easily accounted for, either on principles of reason or Scripture. . . . How easy it is to suppose that a strong, lively, and sudden apprehension of the heinousness of sin, the wrath of God, and the bitter pains of eternal death, should affect the body as well as the soul during the present laws of vital union, should interrupt or disturb the ordinary circulations, and put nature out of its course! Yea, we may question, whether while this union subsists, it be possible for the mind to be affected, in so violent a degree, without some or other of those bodily symptoms following." At the same time, we learn from Scripture, spirits, as far as they have leave from God, "will not fail to torment whom they cannot destroy. . . . There is plain Scripture precedent of every symptom which has lately appeared" (viii, 130-131). But, "when-ever the person convinced tastes the pardoning love of God, they all vanish in a moment." That is why, to Bishop Butler of Bristol, Wesley explains he prays over those in the Societies who "show, by strong cries and tears, that their souls are in deep anguish." And the prayer to God to deliver them from it "is often heard in that hour" (xiii, 500). The answer of peace is properly "the token of God." Its most certain antecedents and its most effective preparation alike consist in the over-anxious mental state that overstrains the nerves and perturbs every organic function.

At times, let us grant, Wesley speaks slightly of these extraordinary circumstances: "If God is

pleased at any time to permit any of these, I cannot hinder it. Neither can this hinder the work of His Spirit in the soul (*Farther Appeal*, 1744, viii, 62). Or, in March, 1768: "They sometimes occur still, but not often. And we do not regard whether they occur or not, knowing that the essence of religion, righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, is quite independent upon them. . . . Outward symptoms have often accompanied the inward work of God. Often I say, not always, not necessarily. They may, or they may not. This work may be without those symptoms, and those symptoms may be without this work" (xiv, 356-358). But he is apt to relapse into highly thinking of them. About 1759 a renewed epidemic of trances and convulsions attended the successful evangelical preaching of the Rev. M. Hickes and Berridge in Cambridgeshire and the adjoining counties: "The danger *was*, he urges, to regard extraordinary circumstances too much, such as outcries, convulsions, visions, trances; as if these were essential to the inward work, so that it could not go on without them. Perhaps the danger *is*, to regard them too little, to condemn them altogether, to imagine they had nothing of God in them, and were an hindrance to His work. Whereas the truth is, 1. God suddenly and strongly convinced many that they were lost sinners, the natural consequence whereof were sudden outcries and strong bodily convulsions: 2. To strengthen and encourage them that believed,

and to make His work more apparent, He favoured several of them with divine dreams, others with trances and visions : 3. In some of these instances, after a time, nature mixed with grace : 4. Satan likewise mimicked this work of God, in order to discredit the whole work : And yet it is not wise to give up this part, any more than to give up the whole. At first it was, doubtless, wholly from God. It is partly so at this day ; and He will enable us to discern how far, in every case, the work is pure, and where it mixes or degenerates. Let us even suppose that in some few cases there was a mixture of dissimulation ; that persons pretended to see or feel what they did not, and imitated the cries or convulsive motions of those who were really overpowered by the Spirit of God : Yet even this should not make us either deny or undervalue the real work of the Spirit. The shadow is no disparagement of the substance, nor the counterfeit of the real diamond. . . . Nothing avails with God but humble love. But still, to slight or censure visions in general, would be both irrational and unchristian" (II, 519-520). His reference to Satan making these visions "an occasion of pride" shows how much those who had them were extolled in Methodist circles. His *Short History of Methodism*, dated November, 1781, and packed with instances of this kind, testifies how partial he remained to them almost to the end. And he was always strongly inclined to consider as "a glorious time" preachings when

several dropped to the ground as if struck by lightning, and cried out in bitterness of soul (I, 357). Perhaps a good deal of his spiritual regard for Grace Murray was grounded in her thus being highly favoured.

Candid respect for facts was, no doubt, in all this, his leading motive. Under the pressure of opponents unanimously asking for his credentials, and challenging him to work wonders, as the only positive proof of his mission from above, it may have been, besides, his unconscious desire to parade something that could not "be accounted for by the ordinary course of natural causes, and which therefore I believe ought to be ascribed to the extraordinary interposition of God. If any man choose to style these *miracles*, I reclaim not. I have diligently inquired into the facts. I have weighed the preceding and following circumstances. I have strove to account for them in a natural way. I could not, without doing violence to my reason" (viii, 460).

But they the more readily found acceptance with him, as they more intensely chimed in with his emotional aspirations. According to one of his latest historians, C. T. Winchester, "The truth is, Wesley's own temperament was so cool and self-possessed, that he often over-estimated the significance of emotion in hearers of a more unrestrained disposition. He measured these outward expressions by the strength of the causes he knew would have been necessary to produce them

in himself. It is quite true that only something very like a miracle would ever have made *him* fall in convulsions, or lose in any wise his self-control ; he did not realise that the average man, without culture and the restraint that comes of long obedience to the conventions of society, can be violently moved without any very unusual agency" (89-90). That Wesley was self-possessed and did not easily lose his self-control will be ungrudgingly granted. Not that he was of cool temperament. The subtle truth perhaps is that the very intensity of his natural affections led him "into the serious error of pronouncing such emotional states the only and necessary tests of Christian character," more precisely the supreme touchstone of the heartiest and most desirable forms of conversion. This is quite of a piece with his rooted belief that religion does not consist in negatives or externals, in bare right opinions, harmlessness or what is called "being good sort of people"; that "repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" is the only way to heaven (viii, 249). Now "he that cometh unto God by this faith, must fix his eye singly on his own wickedness, on his guilt and helplessness, without having the least regard to any supposed good in himself, to any virtue or righteousness whatsoever. He must come as a *mere sinner*, inwardly and outwardly, self-destroyed and self-condemned, bringing nothing to God but ungodliness only, pleading nothing of his own but sin and misery" (v, 63). This is why "the wisdom

of the world is foolishness with God"; the wise and learned, the men of genius, the philosophers, will, last of all, be convinced that they are fools; the respectable moral men, that they are a motley mixture of the beast and the devil; and why the least shall enter the kingdom before the greatest (vi, 283). The public robber, the common harlot, all self-destroyed, self-condemned sinners, will repent the more fervently as they have the more grievously trespassed; they will the more cheerfully acknowledge divine mercy as they have been freely forgiven more heinous offences. The extremity of their sorrow and of their joy will be the gauge of their remorse and of their gratitude. While these redeemed wretches are experiencing such transports, how is it that he, John Wesley, remains "so dead and cold; having peace indeed, but no love or joy in the Holy Ghost?" (xii, 156, 1738). He, whose heart is so flamingly alive to the deceitful charms of the creature, and bounds in such immoderate raptures at the mere thought of Sophy Hopkey or Grace Murray, what raptures ought not his Creator and his Saviour to inspire him with, if he really loved them at all? "O pray for me, that I may see and feel myself a sinner, and have a full interest in the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world! . . . let all the brethren and sisters who are with you pray that God would warm with His love the cold heart of your affectionate brother in Christ" (xiii, 155-156, 1738). For many years, he was apt "to mistake

temporary dulness of feeling for proof of lapse in faith" (Winchester, 90). Heat, he fancied, he needed more than light. As late as February 24, 1786, he bewails to Miss Ritchie, "I see abundantly more than I feel. I want to feel more love and zeal for God" (xiii, 66).

"Count Zinzendorf," he has just explained to the same correspondent, "observes there are three different ways wherein it pleases God to lead his people. Some are guided almost in every instance by apposite texts of Scripture. Others see a clear and plain reason for everything they are to do. And yet others are led not so much by Scripture or reason as by particular impressions. I am very rarely led by impressions, but generally by reason and by Scripture" (*ib*). Though he has found at times all the three concur, he is one of those who are offered "a clear reason for that particular line of duty which they should adopt," his assistant and biographer Henry Moore likewise reports. Here he is even made to blame Zinzendorf for too much relying on divine impressions, which suit only one kind of men, and those only while they continue entirely devoted (*Life*, II, 294). A statement at variance with that letter of July, 1789, to the Rev. F. Garrettson, where, after quoting the same observation of "a great man," whom, however, he does not mention by name, he adds: "But he judges the last to be the least desirable way; as it is often impossible to distinguish dark impressions from divine, or even diabolical. . . .

You speak of finding 'freedom' to do this or that. This is a word much liable to be abused . . . an unscriptural expression, and a very fallacious rule. . . . Will you break your word, because you do not find freedom to keep it? Is not this enthusiasm? O be not of this way of thinking! You know not whither it may lead you" (January, July, 1789, xiii, 73-74). "How do you judge whether a thing be God's will or no?" he sternly expostulates with his brother in 1753, "I hope not by inward impressions" (xii, 115). Highly as he persistently values what has been nicknamed *theopathic hysteria*, he is no friend of impressions.

As a matter of fact, the historical event of Wednesday, May 24, 1738, is the only public instance in his life, when a mere inward impression was suffered to have any considerable influence upon him. To what extent his attitude Godwards, his dealings with the world, and probably the whole of his subsequent career were permanently altered or revolutionized by this "conversion," is equally well known and indisputable. While the reality of this religious change remains beyond question, of the circumstances of it, however, of its peculiar *get-up*, and of the agencies that brought it about, it is impossible not to notice how artificial they were, and how unlike the true Wesley. The form of words that accompanied them, the doctrinal meaning with which they were coloured, had been, for the last fifteen weeks, sedulously engrained into the brothers' brains by Peter Böhler, who just

before sailing from Southampton on May 8, once more stimulated John in pressing Latin exclamations (I, 94). Such conversions were just then epidemic in Methodist and Moravian circles. On May 21, Charles, while laid up at Mr. Bray the brazier's, had had his "day of Pentecost," Mr. Bray's sister, as ordered in a dream by Christ, having appeared to him, and bid him "arise, believe, and be healed of all his infirmities," in the name and character of Jesus of Nazareth (C. W., I, 90-92). The next day they all besettingly joined in intercession for John (*ib.*, 93). About forty-eight hours later, at a religious meeting in Aldersgate Street, while one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans descriptive of the very change "which God works in the heart through faith in Christ," John relates, "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation: And an assurance was given me, that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved me from the law of sin and death" (I, 103). It is as difficult to set any serious supernatural value upon the warming sensation and the inward impression as upon the concomitant doctrine, which he steadily outgrew and discarded piecemeal. Anyhow, he did not raise them out of his own self. They were brought in from outside; and are with him an almost unique occurrence.

Rightly does Moore declare there could not be, in the whole compass of thought, a greater mistake

respecting him than to take him to have been wholly led by impulses and inward feelings. "What his father used to observe of him, when he was a boy, was true to the last moment of his life: 'As for Jack, he will have a reason for everything he is to do. I suppose he would not do anything (*non etiam crepitare*) unless he had a reason for it.' . . . When I have spoken of the probable utility of any proposed measure, he would say, in his usual kind way, 'Come, Henry, *hoc age*. Mind the point in hand. Give me a *reason*'" (*Life*, II, 294). Wesley's self-unfoldings are all to the same effect: "I do not remember to have heard or read anything like my own experience. Almost ever since I can remember, I have been led in a peculiar way. I go on in an even line, being very little raised, at one time, or depressed at another" (xiii, 66). "I found relief in Mr. Wesley's journal," says John Fletcher, "where I learned that we should not build on what we feel, but go to Christ with all our sins, and all our hardness of heart" (xi, 284). An active, quiet trust altogether distinct from any emotional mode of assurance—a word, he informs Walker, that he does not use, because it is not scriptural (xiii, 201, September, 1757). "If I have plain Scripture, or plain reason for doing a thing, well. These are my rules and my only rules. . . . I wish to be, in every point, great and small, a scriptural, rational Christian" (xiii, 73). The same lesson he presses upon others. "Try all things by the written word, and let all

bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture; yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connexion with the context. And so you are, if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning; every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes. I advise you, never to use the words, wisdom, reason, or knowledge, by way of reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more" (xi, 429). To such advice as this, to the labour he spent on educating his preachers and his people, to his constant encouraging them to read, to his indefatigably supplying them with cheap books, it was due that Methodists did not, as a body, plunge into narrow-minded, unenlightened Pietism; that the romantic individualism of their sensation-hunting devoutness was curbed by some sort of classical norm; and that they were durably grouped into an organized society, despite so many and powerful centrifugal forces.

Here, indeed, we reach the crowning and most paradoxical contrast in Wesley's nature and destiny: this highly emotional man was pre-eminently rational, both in his personal conduct and religion. The revival, in which he took a leading part, and which to many minds only conveys the idea of wild excitement and imaginative aberration, will ever be remembered under the sedate name of Methodism: that is to say, in

the Oxford days, strict adherence to University statutes and to all the observances of the Church, doing things at regular hours, and punctually meeting on appointed days to transact carefully planned business ; in later years, an elaborate network of minute, punctilious regulations that cover and control, throughout vast tracts of land, the whole activity of the members of Societies, closely bring them and hold them together, and, even in the turbulent atmosphere of American independence and the French Revolution, keep them under the strictest moral, social, and spiritual discipline, however lawless their former lives, unruly their instincts, erratic the flights of their often diseased fancy. The secret of it almost entirely lies in John Wesley's personal influence, in the exactness of his mind together with the ascendancy of his will.

Neatness was conspicuous in his attire and in every circumstance of his life : " In his chamber and study, I never observed that a book was misplaced, or even a scrap of paper left unheeded," is the testimony of Moore (II, 429). And he was careful to enforce the same duty among his followers : a " complaint has been made that sluts spoil our houses. How may we prevent this?— Let none that has spoiled one, ever live in another," the Minutes of Conference pronounce. " A Preacher's wife should be a pattern of cleanliness in her person, clothes, and habitation. Let nothing slatternly be seen about her ; no rags, no

dirt, no litter . . ." (viii, 332). Hence his ranking so high, among G. Murray's qualifications, that "She is remarkably neat in person, in clothes, in all things" (§ xxxi, 15). "You do not at all understand my manner of life," he writes to a friend. "Though I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry; because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit. It is true, I travel four or five thousand miles in a year. . . ." (xii, 304, 1777). He pathetically laments over "five minutes lost for ever." In the midst of his continual itinerating, nothing could have enabled him to cope with so many uninterrupted requirements but the nicest punctuality. All these are as many signs of his methodical habits. Have we not another striking instance of them in the careful numbering and sub-numbering of paragraphs in his writings? It is at times surprising in his Sermons, for the stiff, dry, scholastic look of which it goes a long way to account. But what of it, when applied to the intimate expression of strong feelings? The composed enumeration of his grievances against his wife may have been a good way to keep anger down. The case may have been the same, when, after reciting in due succession the wrongs he has suffered, he remonstrates with his rival: "Was not your first step wrong? . . . was the second any better? . . . was the third any better than the rest? . . ." (§ xvi, 12, 14). No examining magistrate can classify evidence under more clearly defined heads. This,

no doubt, was Wesley's own practice when he dealt with disputes among his followers, heard them face to face, and enquired into their reasons for being disgusted at each other (§ xx, 46 ; xxii). Emotions, as a rule, do not proceed in such measured, judicial steps. Seldom does a lover, even if thwarted, marshal before his own eyes and the whole world the motives of his love in such orderly array: "I will marry her, because I am persuaded she is in every capacity an help meet for me: first, as a housekeeper . . . ; second, as a nurse . . . ; third, as a companion . . . ; fourth, as a friend . . . ; lastly, as a fellow-labourer . . . ; and because she has grace (particulars of which follow), gifts (ditto), and fruits (ditto) . . ." (§ xxxi, 14-22). And this is how they talk over the date of their marriage: "Before it can take place, it will be needful: 1. To satisfy J. Bennet. 2. To procure Charles's consent. 3. To send an account of the reasons on which I proceeded to every helper" (§ xviii). How correctly the washing lists and general household accounts would have been kept! The same well-ordered habits he carries into the examination of his feelings and of the state of his soul: surely he is not guilty of inordinate affection; for inordinate affection is characterized by one, two, three, four, five symptoms, which he recounts; and there is no trace of them in himself (§ xxxvi). Recollect also in what accurate detail he draws up the bill of all his successive opinions with regard to matrimony

(§ xxxi, 1-7). Surely such minute introspection has not been sufficiently taken into account by those who hold that it was a mere morbid feature of his ritualistic Oxford days, when he was ever anxious to balance his conscience accounts with an exacting Supreme Judge; and altogether vanished, as it were by enchantment, on Wednesday night, May 24, 1738, when he found settled peace with an heavenly Father. The next ensuing pages of the *Journal*, where he, as solicitously as ever before, pores over his every doubt and fear, sufficiently dispose of that theory. Afterwards, it is true, they do not take quite so much room, perhaps because his busy outward activity prevented him from keeping his eyes so steadfastly fixed on his inward state; more probably because he had too many other things to relate. Anyhow, as shown by the Grace Murray narrative, he never completely exorcised the subtle spell of self-analysis.

The rational character of it is the next point that calls for notice. It evinces the expertness of a man well used to dissolve any sentiment into its component parts, to distinguish and set apart the nicest shades of thought, to split hairs even, if it came to that. In his self-scrutiny as to inordinate affection is, for instance, the difference very material between being "less desirous of doing the works of God, less zealous to pray, preach, or do good in any kind," and "being cold and dead in preaching, praying, or any other office of religion?" Tautology one would almost call it at the

first blush. A real difference, however, there is. "To divide simple terms according to the logical rules of division," Wesley's *Remarks upon the Essay on the Human Understanding* lay it down, "and to define each member of the division according to the three rules of definition, does all that human art can do, in order to our having a clear and distinct idea of every word we use. Had Mr. Locke done this, what abundance of obscurity and confusion would have been prevented!" (xiii, 462.) A sly hit at the quondam student of Christ Church, who had blasphemed the boons of his Alma Mater by reviling the "unprofitableness of these verbal niceties." Similarly forty years earlier, when abridging Norris's *Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life with reference to the Study of Learning and Knowledge*, Wesley had taken good heed to suppress a whole passage in unqualified condemnation of sophistical disputation, as still enthroned in the Universities (Norris, 1691, 51-60). Disputations on every imaginable topic, grammar, rhetoric, ethics, politics, logic were the most important and the most frequently recurring exercises both in the colleges and in the schools for the bachelor's and the master of art's degrees. The *determination* for the M.A. opened, on Ash Wednesday, with a four hours' disputation; every determiner was to hold two more disputations in the course of Lent, when he was always to maintain, on every question, the doctrine of Aristotle and the Peri-

patetics. Next came the *disputationes apud Augustinenses*, so called because formerly scholars used to dispute with Augustinian monks. Next, the *disputationes quodlibeticæ*, when you had to respond to any disputant on any question (C. Wordsworth, *University Studies*, 219-221).

Such was the training Wesley underwent at Oxford. As a newly elected Fellow of Lincoln, barely twenty-three years old, he was on November 7, 1726, appointed moderator of the classes: in which capacity he had to preside over disputations held every day in the week except Sunday in the College Hall. A thesis would be proposed; disputants would argue on one side or the other; the moderator would listen to their arguments, and decide with whom the victory lay (Overton, *J. W.*, 20-21). Here Wesley thought he had acquired "some degree of expertness in arguing and pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies (x, 353). Yet, he said, logic was little learnt at Oxford (viii, 219). However unfashionable it had become, despite "what the little wits and pretty gentlemen affirm, that 'logic is good for nothing,' it is good for this at least, (wherever it is understood) to make people talk less; by showing them both what is, and what is not to the point; and how extremely hard it is to prove anything." It is the art of good sense; the art of learning and teaching; the very gate of the sciences, quite necessary to the Clergy, every member of which ought "to have it always ready for use; so as to apply every rule

of it, when occasion is, almost as naturally as I turn my hand." Every one ought to ask himself: "Do I understand it at all? Are not even the moods and figures above my comprehension? Do not I poorly endeavour to cover my ignorance, by affecting to laugh at their barbarous names? Can I even reduce an indirect mood to a direct; an hypothetic to a categorical syllogism?" (x, 492.)

There is fervid piety in this pedantic litany. Does not this, again, sound like a victorious hymn: "I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art. By this, when men have hedged me in by what they called demonstrations, I have been many times able to dash them in pieces; in spite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay; and it flew open in a moment. This is the art which I have used with Bishop Warburton, as well as in the preceding pages. When Dr. E. twisted truth and falsehood together, in many of his propositions, it was by this art I untwisted the one from the other, and showed just how far each was true. At doing this, I bless God, I am expert; as those will find who attack me without rhyme or reason. . . . I have answered Bishop Warburton plainly and directly, and so untwisted his arguments that no man living will be able to piece them together" (x, 353). Being past master in intellectual fencing, he visibly enjoys the game. Throughout the account of his love with Grace Murray, his love of argument

is everywhere obvious. All his former objections to marriage he removes one by one. What an air of triumph in this conclusion: "All my seven arguments against marriage are totally set aside. Nay, some of them seem to prove that I ought to marry" (xxxi, 8 . . . , 25). "I cannot receive any of these propositions without proof," he calmly replies to his brother's expostulations—*inferences*, he calls them, to such extent does everything in others appear to him as the result of some ratiocinative process (xxvii). And by ratiocinative processes, he fancies every man may be convinced of anything: therefore, he wants to send to every preacher and society an account of the reasons on which he proceeds (xviii); when these things are fairly represented, it is his belief, that not only nineteen in twenty of the preachers and societies will be satisfied, but the reasonable part of the world (xxxi, 29). He is still the boy whose arguing disposition almost frightened his father, unless the Rector chose to laugh at his notion that everything in the world could be carried by argument (Samuel W., September 1, 1725; Tyerman, *S.W.*, 395). Others are fond of inventing living beings, conflicts of interests and passions, clashes of character-betraying utterances, which almost spontaneously shape themselves into dramatic action and dialogue. Dialogue also Wesley will freely use, in this narrative as well as in many of his tracts and sermons: to him, it is but a more lively way of stating and answering arguments; the

supreme achievement of dialectical mastery (xxx, 30).

Yet in this, one of John Wesley's distinguishing gifts, lies also the root of his intellectual limitations and shortcomings. Most of his controversial tracts are mere barren chains of syllogisms, in which he takes, one after the other, his opponents' statements, and ruins them, without building up anything in their stead. It is mere negative criticism, and formal dialectics. Too many of his doctrinal sermons, likewise, are dry abstract mental operations on various texts of Scripture, without any particle of living experience, or any of that picturesque power of observation which makes his *Journals* and his occasional utterances on moral and social matters so attractive. His contribution to Apologetics bears the same stamp. As far as theoretic work is concerned, he is content with answering adversaries such as Dr. Middleton by "untwisting truth from falsehood, and dashing their so-called demonstrations in pieces." By way of a preservative against unsettled notions, he will, besides, republish other people's writings, Leslie's *Short and Easy Method with the Deists*, or a French *Treatise concerning the Godhead of Jesus Christ* (R. Green, p. 106). His *Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation* is mainly translated from Buddaeus (*ib.*, 125), or from Mr. Bonnet's *Contemplation of Nature* (*ib.*, 191). What he propounds of his own, is, for instance, his *clear and concise demonstration of the divie inspiration of then*

Holy Scriptures: Christianity is built upon four grand pillars—miracles, prophecies, the goodness of the doctrine, and the moral character of the penmen; in other words, the power, understanding, goodness, and holiness of God. And it terminates by a trilemma: "The Bible must be the invention either of good men or angels, bad men or devils, or of God. 1. It could not be the invention of good men or angels; for they neither would nor could make a book, and tell lies all the time they were writing, saying, 'Thus saith the Lord,' when it was their own invention. 2. It could not be the invention of bad men or devils, for they would not make a book which commands all duty, forbids all sin, and condemns their souls to hell to all eternity. 3. Therefore, I draw this conclusion, that the Bible must be given by divine inspiration" (xi, 484). However battered by biblical and philosophic criticism, in which, nevertheless, he was fairly well read, the traditional line of argument, practically unaltered, supplies him with premisses.

What lurks behind this imposing logical armour might be termed nowadays Christian agnosticism. As often happens to bold deductive minds, he had early shrunk from the possible consequences of his own deductions: "I am convinced, from many experiments, I could not study, to any degree of perfection, either mathematics, arithmetic, or algebra, without being a Deist, if not an Atheist" (vi, 128). "Dr. Ramsay's treatise gave me a

stronger conviction than ever I had before, both of the fallaciousness and unsatisfactoriness of the mathematical method of reasoning on religious subjects. Extremely fallacious it is; for, if we slip but in one line, a whole train of errors may follow. And utterly unsatisfactory, at least to me, because I can never be sufficiently assured that this is not the case" (xii, 211). What he says here of mathematics is equally true of any systematic logical construction. Logic, therefore, he confines to protective ancillary purposes. While a precursor as regards the medical application of electricity, he kept scoffing at nearly all the aims and claims of speculative science in his own days; at Sir Isaac Newton's theory of gravitation (vi, 427); at astronomers' pretending to ascertain the distance and size of stars (xiii, 489-490); at Buffon's wild whimsical account of the formation of the earth (*ib.*, 452). Metaphysics he only recommended as part of academical training. Being more and more strongly alive to the weakness of the human understanding, which has been impaired by the Fall, he held that our knowledge is "confined within very narrow bounds; abundantly narrower than common people imagine, or men of learning are willing to acknowledge," though exactly adapted to the present wants of man (vi, 337). "It is so far from being true that there is no knowledge after we have quitted the body, that the doubt lies on the other side, whether there be any such thing as real knowledge till then; whether

it be not a plain sober truth, not a mere poetical fiction, that—

All these shadows, which for things we take,
Are but the empty dreams, which in death's sleep we make ;

only excepting those things which God himself has been pleased to reveal to man. I will speak for one. After having sought for truth, with some diligence, for half a century, I am, at this day, hardly sure of anything but what I learn from the Bible. Nay, I positively affirm, I know nothing else so certainly, that I would dare to stake my salvation upon it" (vi, 141-142, 1768). As he says of the manner how God is present to all beings, reason is only able to keep the way open "to prove that this mystery is possible. Revelation assures us that it is true. Heaven alone can show us how it is" (xii, 211, September, 1753). And, indeed, solely to keep the way open in the service of his sceptical Christian idealism did his reason exert its acute dialectical powers.

This largely accounts for Coleridge's strongly worded contempt of "a logical shadow-fight with notions and words, sustained by the fervour of the game, with an entire absence and unsusceptibility of ideas and tranquil depths of being. . . . I am persuaded that Wesley never rose above the region of logic. . . . The moment an idea presents itself to him, his understanding intervenes to eclipse it, and he substitutes a conception by some process of deduction. Nothing

is *immediate* to him . . ." (Southey, I, 105, 243-244, notes). Nor had Alexander Knox, who had been closely acquainted with him for the last twenty-five years of his life, a much higher opinion of Wesley's soundness of judgment: "It would seem that his actual destination, however valuable in its essential principles, and important in its ultimate results, was never to emerge from circumstantial extravagance. While, in certain respects, he was susceptible of mental improvement, and by that means may have infinitely risen in value, as an instrument of Providence, *for eventual benefit*, such I conceive was the native character of his intellectual machinery, that he was to be always liable to fallacious apprehensions, false calculation, and disproportioned energy both of design and execution" (*Remarks on Southey*, II, 332-333).

Notwithstanding occasional flashes of philosophic insight (his sermon on the Original of the Law, for instance, has been described as remindful of Plato), the plain fact undeniably is, that we must not look to his works for constructive speculative thought and far-reaching original ideas. The leisure and willingness, perhaps, he lacked more than the power to indulge in them.¹ As regards the critical faculty, it is far clearer

¹ The editor of the *Journal* remarks that "the severe concentration on selected subjects and the rigid self-denial in the matter of current literature necessary to expert scholarship never characterized Wesley at either Christ Church or Lincoln . . . he was essentially discursive" (standard edition, I, 21).

that he was devoid of it, at least in one curious way. His strong lucid common sense has been, indeed, rightly admired. In historical matters, he was fifty years in advance of his age, if we trust Dr. Rigg, who quotes several examples of his "penetrating, independent, impartial views" on Roman and universal history, the history of Ireland, above all the history of England; and of his laughing "at the credulity of sceptical contemporaries," Abbé Raynal to begin with (Rigg, 186-192). His comments on scientific writers, particularly on Buffon's *Natural History*, are also wonderfully sharp; and many of his strictures are quite prophetic—mostly by way of doubt and reserve-making. He excels in detecting improbabilities and unmasking preposterous assumptions. But, singularly enough, this power, which makes him "one of the keenest and most sceptical of historical critics," when dealing with books and things of the past, suddenly fails him when confronting flesh and bone human beings. "Mr. Wesley's chief weakness," Whitehead writes, "was a too great readiness to credit the testimony of others, when he believed them sincere, without duly considering whether they had sufficient ability and caution to form a true judgment of the things concerning which they bore testimony" (II, 301-302). His brother used to say more roundly that John was born for the benefit of knaves. "I have neither more, nor less faith in human testimony than I had

10 or 15 years ago," John would answer. "I could suspect every man that speaks to me, to be either a blunderer or a liar. But I will not. I dare not till I have proof" (xii, 115. October 20, 1753). The outcome of this charitable resolution was, that he took people at their face, or mouth, value. If they were sincere, so much the better: he could then give them discriminating spiritual advice, aptly suited to their several conditions and needs. If they were dissemblers, he would seldom see through them, unless illuminated by a sudden flood of evidence. Sophy Hopkey's feigned earnestness would find him as solicitously helpful as Mary Pendarves's genuine scruples, or as any saintly Methodist sister. "His choice of confidants and favourites did little honour to his sagacity," Hampson asserts with a loyal eye to Dr. Coke's supposed influence on the Deed of Declaration that had not included his father. "Whatever knowledge he might have had of the general motives and principles of human nature, he does not seem to have been happy in penetrating into the views and characters of individuals" (III, 200). This particularly appears in his love-affairs, in which matters, it must be confessed with Dr. Rigg, he was not fortunate (p. 81). Many readers will agree that his attachment to Grace Murray was rather injudicious. Very few will dispute that his espousing Mary Vazeille was a thorough mistake. The marvellous trials and experiences

of the one, the "sorrowful spirit" of the other, had won his heart and blinded him to everything else.

Such unguarded faith in living "witnesses," combined with his sentimental eagerness for religious wonders and excitement, resulted in "voracious credulity." From the scope of his keen sceptical criticism, Dr. Rigg is compelled to except "the sphere of spiritual powers and realities." Whether or no, in the haunted Epworth Rectory, "a right-of-way for the supernatural was opened through his mind," it is unquestionable that "to the end of life, there was nothing so marvellous that it could not freely pass where *Old Jeffrey* had passed before it" (Taylor: *W. and Meth.*). Hence the stress he lays upon stories of apparitions, witchcraft and possession.

"I cannot argue against matter of fact," he beautifully exclaims in a preface to the *Life of Thomas Firmin*, "a pious man, although his notions of the Trinity were quite erroneous" (xiv, 293). But facts inadequately criticized are dangerous ground for logic to build upon. In this respect, the account of his love affair with Grace Murray, again, is conclusive. How many of the praises that he had lavished on his beloved, we see him quickly withdrawing! (xxxi, 15, 17.) We see, likewise, how easily many facts are wrested just the way every one pleases. Take, for example, John Bennet's dreams: "That very night, God warned you, in a vision or dream, of one who had a prior

right, but whom, at your instance, she pushed away. Yet you construed it in quite another manner" (xvi, 9). What proof that Wesley's construction is the more accurate? Yet he infers from it that God is on his side. The same with his several presages (xl); the same with his interpretation of the Bible, of St. Paul's words to the Corinthians, especially, which he first views in a strong light, as meaning "it was impossible for a married man to be so without carefulness, or to attend upon the Lord with so little distraction, as a single man might do," and, a few years later, takes in a widely different sense (xxxix, 5, 11). Nay, it is one of the seven arguments which not only are altogether set aside, "but some of them seem to prove both that I ought to marry, and that Grace Murray is the person" (*ib.* 25). Yet, the Epistle to the Corinthians has not been written anew in the interval. Nothing has changed but the reader's own dispositions and wishes. This very triumph spells the ruin of logic. If solid facts and positive texts are so elusive, what valid conclusions are we to found on them? Nor is the case at all an exception in his life: not only before his conversion, but ever after, his doctrines kept shifting more or less perceptibly, but constantly and thoroughly. "I did incline to this scheme for many years," he writes to Charles, in August, 1752, "but of late I have doubted of it more and more: First, because all the texts which I used to think supported it, I now think prove either more or less;

either absolute reprobation and election, or neither. Secondly, because I find this opinion serves all the ill purposes of absolute predestination, particularly that of supporting infallible perseverance. Talk with any that holds it, and so you will find" (xii, 114). Some consciousness of this mental instability may have lain at the root of his scepticism, and of the growing undogmaticalness of his later years.

We have been told that, in him, "the sentimental strain was grafted upon an essentially critical temperament" (Winchester, 284). Sentiment, in Wesley, was more than a strain or a graft; it was the very essence of his soul, and quality of his nature. As for his critical temperament, we have seen the limitations of it. He defines the understanding as a faculty which exerts itself in three ways: simple apprehension which barely conceives things in the mind; judgment, which determines that things agree or differ; discourse, which is the motion or progress of the mind from one judgment to another (vi, 353). In all three operations his intellect excelled. But this reason of his, far from being an originaive power, was a mere formal frame or process. And, in spite of the most rigid dialectical appearances, we have shown how feeble and impotent it really was. Had it been the controlling element, Wesley would have proved unfit for any definite teaching or any steady purpose. His native fund of enthusiasm supplied the motive power; the directing and

regulating of which were effected neither by argument nor by any abstract concept. From Scripture, he thought, sprang the aims his reason conceived or apprehended; in reality, they sprang from his own spiritual sense, awakened perhaps and educated in contact with, or by means of, Scripture, then reading itself into it from time to time. So that, what he called and took to be the mere letter of the Bible was, in fact, the reverberation of his higher life. And the ultimate test of truth for him was, whether any given notion fed this higher life, fostered the interests of this spiritual sense, both in himself and in others: "I find this opinion serves all the ill purposes of predestination; particularly that of supporting infallible perseverance," he was writing to Charles; that is to say, translated into the language of concrete circumstances: brother or sister so and so feel so confident of being God's elect, that they neglect all the means, relax their moral endeavour, and impair their sense of duty. This is the way in which the best part of Church tradition has been building for centuries; and this was the mainspring of John Wesley's dogmatic constructiveness during his fifty years' Methodist activity.

"The fact was," Alexander Knox remarks, after praising the essential soundness and rationality of Wesley's religion, "that this paramount principle had, in the first instance, attracted the *heart* of John Wesley; and as the strength of his moral nature lay *there*, far more than in his understanding or

in his imagination, the enshrined treasure was both too solid in itself, and too firmly fixed, to be either injured or disturbed by the errors of the one or the illusions of the other" (p. 338). The *heart*: that is to say, no blind animal impulse; but the free choice of the will guided, not by any clear preconceived notions of the understanding, but by the subtle inarticulate, yet imperious dictates of the conscience. From the days when the reading of Dr. Cheyne's *Treatise of Health and Long Life*, along with Thomas à Kempis, had revived in his soul the religious seed that had been planted there at Epworth, bringing home to him the mischievousness of passions, the hatefulness of sin, the wretched state of perpetual war with one's self and one's fellow-men it entails, the possibility of happiness to be found in God alone, never did he cease striving after more exact obedience and closer union to the one pacifying centre of spirits; never did he remit his efforts to draw, in increasing numbers, repenting sinners, above all the poorest, the most profligate, the most neglected, under the same salutary influence; never did he rest in the work of providing for their social and moral welfare. Meanwhile, his own views were being continually cleared up in this process, and tested by their congruity with the practical requirements of the individual and the masses. Thus his rational powers were used for no other end than the task of promoting the belief in God and the service of God. And the

supreme ruling element in his nature remains the will, acting in compliance with the summons of conscience.

Of his tremendous will-power, over himself and over others, evidences abound throughout his life. To it he owed the almost mesmeric prestige which worked such wonderful effects over large crowds. Another form of it was his unflinching courage in face of threatening mobs, whom he not seldom conquered. In his thoroughly British strength of character partly lies the secret of his enduring popularity among English-speaking races. With regard to himself, who would not agree with Hampson, that "his temper was naturally warm and impetuous. Religion had, in a great degree, corrected this, though it was by no means eradicated" (III. 179)? Or, to quote Dr. Rigg, "in proportion to his natural susceptibility to the warm attraction of intimate and fond affections, was the rigidity of watchful suppression which he imposed upon his temperament, when the solemn life-work which Providence had assigned to him demanded his undivided and unintermitted energies." And this it was that lent a countenance to the idea that he was "wanting in the softer and warmer emotions of our nature" (*Living Wesley*, 45-46). Both the energy of his emotions and the vigour of his self-control are nowhere better illustrated than in the account of his love for Grace Murray. After reading it, one stares at Tyerman's reluctance "to dwell on matters of extreme deli-

cacy, and which, under ordinary circumstances, ought not to be introduced." Are these "details usually too delicate to be put in print"? Has this been "a painful exposure"? Does "the transaction stain the character of the great reformer"? (II. 48, 54).

His passion is, indeed, sincere and profound; yet, on account of it, where does he neglect or give up any part of his task? In the height of his love, and when it is beset with most perils, he leaves Grace at Allendale and takes horse for Whitehaven (§ xxiv). Nothing must interfere with his journeying and preaching. In spite of his forebodings, shivering, and fever, seeing a vast congregation in the market-place, he cannot send them empty away (§ xxvi). "If I had had more regard for her I loved, than for the work of God, I should now have gone on strait to Newcastle, and not back to Whitehaven. I knew this was giving up all. But I knew God called, and therefore set out" (§ xxxvii). No empty boasting, this; but mere matter of fact, never intended to be published.

"Since I was six years old, I never met with such a severe trial as for some days past. . . . The fatal, irrecoverable stroke was struck on Thursday last. Yesterday I saw my friend, (that was), and him to whom she is sacrificed. I believe you never saw such a scene." But "why should a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins?" so he writes to Thomas Bigg. And he quotes the words of Ezekiel, which had already

served the same purpose in the case of Sophy Hopkey: "Son of man, behold! I take from thee the desire of thine eyes at a stroke; yet shalt thou not lament, neither shall thy tears run down" (*Works*, xiii, 162-163).

The blow has been struck, he feels it deeply indeed; so deeply that, contrary to his habit, this is one of the few episodes in his life he will never mention to his closest friends (Moore, II, 166¹). Not until forty years later, after an affecting interview with her, did Moore hear of the event. Deep-felt regret the account of John's meeting with Whitefield, of his first conversation with John Bennet and his wife, likewise betoken. Yet we find nothing but uncomplaining resignation. And his devotion to duty has its own reward in itself: in deepest heaviness, his mind is made easy by remembering an appointment to preach (xxxix).

No wonder that one so hard upon himself should occasionally be hard upon others. "Did you ever

¹ "In the year 1788, the son of Mr. Bennet officiated at a chapel on the *Pavement* in Moorfields, and his mother came to London in that year on a visit to him. Mr. Thomas Olivers, having seen her, mentioned the circumstance to Mr. Wesley, as I was with him, and intimated that Mrs. Bennet wished to see him. Mr. Wesley, with evident feeling, resolved to visit her: and the next morning he took me with him to Colebrook Row, where her son then resided. The meeting was affecting; but Mr. Wesley preserved more than his usual self-possession. It was easy to see, notwithstanding the many years which had intervened, that both in sweetness of spirit, and in person and manners, she was a fit subject for the tender regrets expressed in those verses which I have presented to the reader. The interview did not continue long, and I do not remember that I ever heard Mr. Wesley mention her name afterward" (Moore, *Life of Wesley*, II, 171). John Wesley died on March 2, 1791; three years after his brother Charles.

see him inattentive to the feelings of others, when those feelings did not impede his plan of usefulness?" his niece Sarah asked Adam Clarke after relating an instance of his kindness (Telford, 359-360). This is exactly where he draws the line. Any one who hinders him from "the one business on earth,—to save souls," he will ride over with Juggernaut impassibility. Hence the tone of his later letters to his wife, and of some of his letters to Charles. Hence the seeming callousness with which he treats creature losses; "the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, and wise are all his ways. The great point is to understand the design of His gracious wisdom, and to answer and fulfil that design. One thing is certain: He calls you to a more full and absolute dedication of your soul and body to Him," he writes to a widower (*M. Preachers*, I, 238-239). More harshly does he rebuke Adam Clarke or his sister Martha's excessive mourning for children. What strikes us, at the first superficial glance, as deliberate hard-heartedness, selfish care and petty calculation, his money reckonings, his arranging beforehand to board his sons at Kingswood, are only further instances of his devotion to duty and trust in Providence (§ xxxi, 6, 7, 13).

Similarly, his most unhealthy mental growths, whatever may be held childish or superstitious in his opinions—and with such "childishness" and "superstition" the Bible also is teeming—often spring from the vividness of his faith in the super-

natural presence. Hence his strong propensity to assert divine miraculous interferences on every occasion. Was it not God warned John Bennet, in a dream or vision, of his rival's prior claim? (§ xvi, 9). God, who once more interposed by means of those who were near Bennet? When he and his horse were creeping on the road to Hineley Hill, where he had appointed to preach, was it not God who was pleased to strengthen both Man and Beast, so that both grew better every hour? (xxxii). Upon his praying, the stars guided him across Penruddock Moor (xxxiii). Was it not upon his lifting up his heart, when lost in a fog on Hatside brow, that God made the fog to vanish in a moment? (xxxvii). When sleep had fled from his eyes, and a burning fever was almost affecting his senses, was it not God who took that matter into His hands, and gave him, on a sudden, sound, quiet sleep? (xliii). In Whitehaven market-place, was it not God who remembered and comforted him in soul and body? (xxvi). Even his fear that God could not give Bennet his blessing (xvi, 14) is only an extreme form and a further proof of his steady, spontaneous trust in Providence, who rules over everything and overrules everything for our good. Grace Murray's "severe discipline was designed to prepare her for a comforter of many, a mother in Israël" (xix). They part: "I had not one uneasy thought, believing God would give us to meet again, at the time when he saw good" (xxiv). He has his mind stayed on God; he is

calm, even through his sadness, looking for help from Him only to whom all things are possible (xxxiii, xxxvi). This is the highest and only trustworthy sort of assurance, which, relying altogether on divine goodness, rids the mind of cares and anxious self-analysis, increases tenfold man's power of action, and bestows upon his old age unruffled serenity.

In this entire subjection of the will to God, speaking through conscience, as the one necessary and the unique motive of conduct, all differences and inconsistencies, as well as all absurdities and foibles, merge into a higher principle of unity. Speaking of Wesley's unfeigned attachment to the Church of England and of his more sensitive practical union to his own Society, A. Knox points out that "two dissonant principles, wrought in Mr. Wesley's mind . . ., there were two sets of affections, of which each had a real place in his heart" (*Remarks*, 314, 319). The same anomaly runs through the whole of his career: with equal right, he has been hailed as the true heir of the Puritans and as the authentic forerunner of the Oxford Tractarians; he was a warm admirer of George III, an autocratic foe of Republicans, and many features of his political writings are nowadays described as socialistic; he was tender, and he was rough; he was constitutionally emotional, with an intensely logical intellect. In every part of him there is a duality, as from a twofold origin, which baffles any generalized statement, and is

only reconciled in the all-pervading singleness of his religious purpose.

The unreserved, unsparing surrender of his will to conscience, as the organ of God, does not merely constitute the unity of his character, and the enduring greatness of his genius: it even invests them with all there is in them of artistic beauty.

A recent writer, discussing the authorship of some fine hymns translated from the German in the joint poetical works of the Wesleys, concluded (against all the evidence of fact since brought to light by the standard edition of the *Journal and Diary*) that they must be the work of Charles (W. H. S., 1909, p. 146). The verve and ring of them he contrasts with the "tedious poem" that closes the account of the elder brother's love with Grace Murray. Surely, he argues, if John had possessed more than bare poetic taste and versifying skill, this crisis in his life must have evoked the "vision and faculty divine."

Without attempting to vindicate the "tedious poem," one cannot but notice the superior quality of the purely religious passages in it, with their rich grave Psalm-like rhythm and tone.

O Lord, I bow my sinful Head !
 Righteous are all thy ways with man . . .
 Unsearchable thy Judgments are,
 O Lord, a bottomless abyss !
 Yet sure, thy love, thy guardian Care,
 O'er all thy Works extended is. . . .

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What thou hast done, I know not now,
Suffice I shall hereafter know !
Beneath thy chastning hand I bow ;
That still I live, to thee I owe.
O teach thy deeply-humbled son,
To say, Father, thy will be done !

Teach me, from every pleasing Snare,
To keep the issues of my Heart :
Be thou my Love, my Joy, my Fear.
Thou my eternal portion art.
Be thou my never-failing friend,
And love, O love me to the end !

For God was, after all, the only lasting absorbing passion of John Wesley. And it is not a little significant that this, the account of probably his most fervent attachment to a creature, should, on the whole, enhance our idea of his all-sacrificing, self-sacrificing devotedness to his supernatural mission.

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